

"Digital" VCRs Tested

Video

New
Releases
*Karate Kid II,
Cobra, Short Circuit*

37869
\$1.95

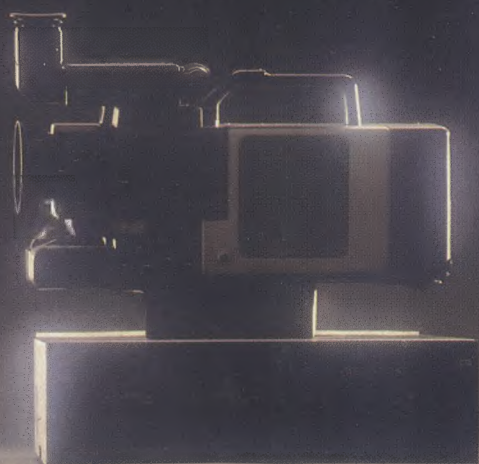
JANUARY 1987

The #1 Magazine of Home Video

The Picks Of '86

All The Hits In Gear, Tapes & Discs

**Which
Camcorder
Is For You**
*VHS,
VHS-C,
Or 8mm?*



First On Your VCR
Raising The Titanic

Interviews
*Pat Boone, Geraldine
Page, Chris Reeve*

YEAR'S
BEST



TESTS
Zenith Side-Loading VHS VCR
Toshiba Digital-Effect VHS VCR

Not Evolutionary,

Pioneer's Revolutionary 40" Projection Monitor

You are invited to take an inside look at the most revolutionary advancement in the history of color television—the Pioneer SD-P40 Projection Monitor. Because Pioneer has discovered the secret to combining the bigness of projection TV and the brilliance and precision of direct-view monitors.

The SD-P40 uses 7-inch projection CRTs and 160mm power lenses, the largest ever built for home use. Together they achieve over 300 foot-lamberts of brightness—brightness further enhanced by a first-of-its-kind, highly efficient, direct-coupled liquid lens and liquid cooling system. It utilizes a larger radiator and a unique pressure control valve to maintain cooler operating temperatures and longer life.

Special multi-coated lenses and a carefully-designed optical path reduce internal reflections and ghosting. The benefit—contrast so superior it surpasses that of any other projection system.

The SD-P40 is the only set of any kind to hold focus right to the corners of the screen—because only Pioneer utilizes a Dynamic Focus Circuit that adjusts the focal length of the electron beam as it scans every point on the flat CRT face. And there's a new High Voltage Stabilizer Circuit that all but eliminates "blooming"—that annoying fuzziness ordinarily seen around white lettering and objects at high brightness levels.

Each of the SD-P40's three projection tubes

has its own Velocity Modulation Circuit for sharper focus and less bloom. One of the SD-P40's more remarkable benefits is its wide viewing field. Even when viewed from off-center, the picture is bright

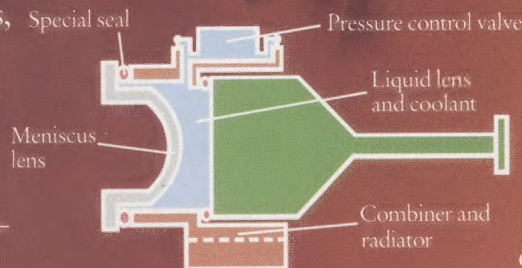
and clear with none of the annoying color shift so noticeable on other projection systems. This "wall-to-wall" chromatic accuracy is made possible by the SD-P40's unique double-sided lenticular screen. The front lenticular screen also disperses ambient

room light to eliminate glare, and enhance contrast.

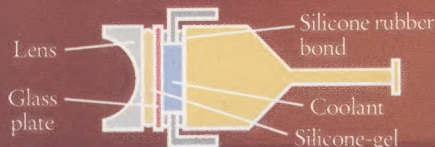
The Pioneer SD-P40 is fully equipped with all the latest accommodations for television of today and the future. The 139-channel cable-capable tuner includes an MTS decoder for Broadcast Stereo Television and Second Audio Programs.

Three direct video inputs accommodate LaserDisc™ and two VCRs. A high-powered built-in stereo amplifier and speaker system deliver impressive sound. All of these features are immediately accessible via Pioneer's 54-function handheld system remote control (SR).

Perhaps we should close by saying that words can never do justice to the SD-P40's revolutionary picture. And if you really want to see the best and the brightest big picture ever made, you have to see your Pioneer Dealer first. For more information, call 1-800-421-1404.



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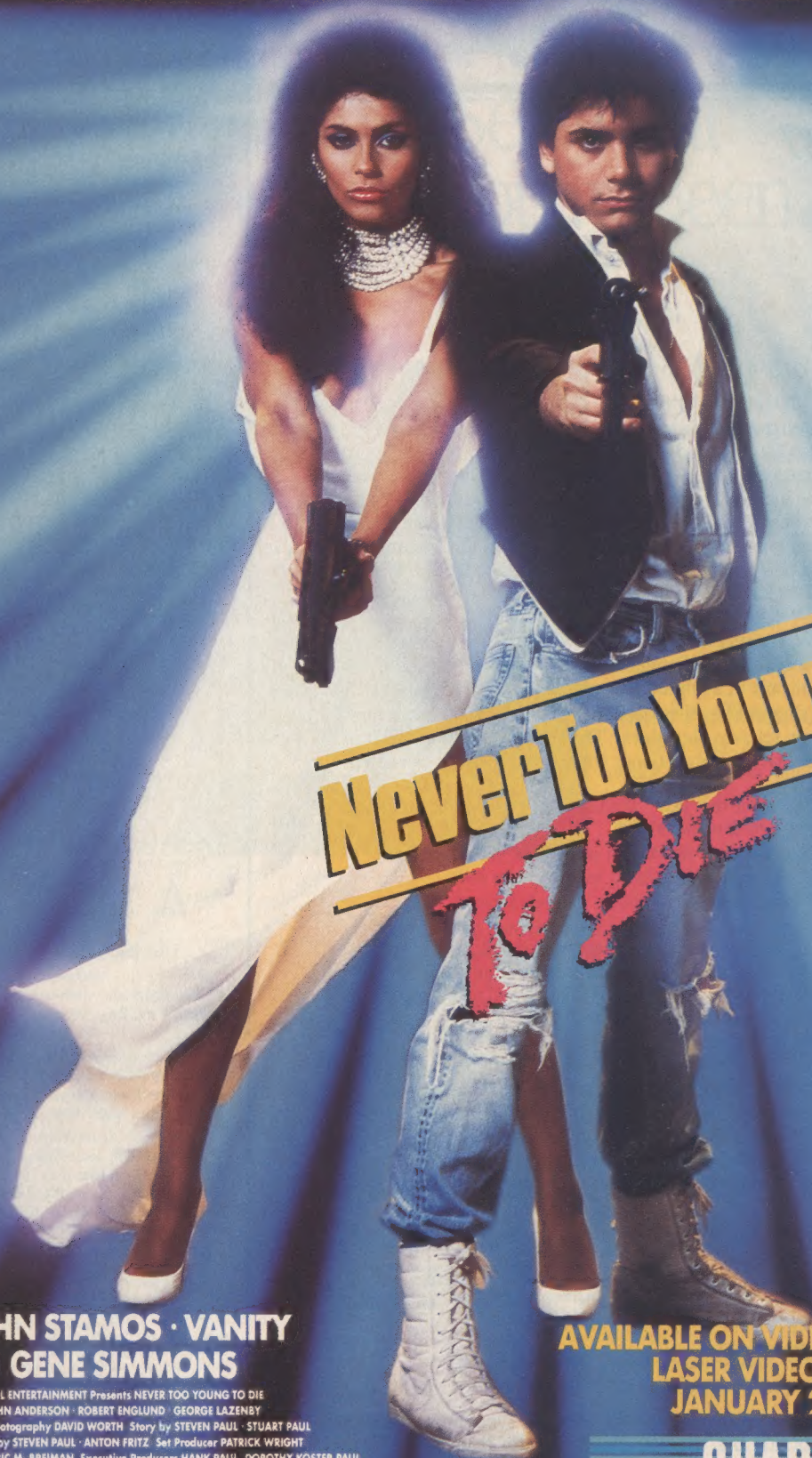
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About the Cover. That was the year
that was in home video gear and pro-
gramming. Photograph by Dan Barba.

**STARGROVE: HE HELD AMERICA'S FATE IN ONE HAND AND
THE WORLD'S SEXIEST WOMAN IN THE OTHER!**



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Channel One

Wish List '87

Two years ago, we celebrated the end of a successful video season with a bout of year-end caprice—a video wish list. It included the practical (a commercial zapper for VCRs), the ridiculous (an exercise tape starring Divine), the whiney (*E.T.* and *Ghostbusters* on tape), and the incredibly optimistic (“Beta catches up to VHS”). What happened? Vidicraft introduced a black box that somewhat reliably edited out the ads. Karl-Lorimar confidently ignored our plea for what would have been the lowest-grossing (and, uh, grossest) exercise tape of all time. *Ghostbusters* finally made it to cassette but *E.T.* didn’t. And Beta, well, you can’t blame us for dreaming.

We also pined for “digital TV, for real.” You may recall that manufacturers were claiming they were on the eve of the digital era in viewscreen technology. Digital TV has arrived, of course, but only in a limited manner. While NEC, Panasonic, Zenith and others introduced digital TVs, they were mostly to show off other features like picture-in-picture or teletext decoders. The picture quality of digital isn’t significantly better than that of conventional analog sets. That’s what we meant by “for real.”

Here’s what we’ve been hoping for this year. It should convince even the most skeptical that we’re still a bunch of dreamers.

1. Voice-actuated VCR programming, which will also work via telephone.
2. *E.T.* on tape.
3. A camcorder (\$500?) for the masses.
4. Hi-definition TV.
5. VHS HQ labels that say which circuits have been enhanced.
6. No more rock videos that are really disguised movie promotions.
7. No more movie ad lines that promise to “make you laugh and make you cry.”
8. A rap video from the Indianapolis Colts, *Cellar Dweller Fever*.
9. Cable TV in Queens and Brooklyn.
10. More tapes by, for, and about cats.
11. An end to copy protection schemes that screw up regular viewing.
12. Full-frame transfers for films.
13. Federal subsidies to libraries to finance video collections.
14. More TV shows and alternative movies on tape.
15. A “beware of Ed Meese” warning on adult tapes, replacing the FBI copyright notice.
16. Best Actor Oscar for Paul Newman.
17. Sean and Madonna sleeping-in for peace.
18. The Bravo channel miraculously available on every cable system.
19. An end to advertisements that use the words “digital” and “electronic compatibility” misleadingly.
20. David Letterman’s home videos.

*

*

*

Our thanks this month to Polaroid for the use of its new FreezeFrame Video Recorder, which produces prints and transparencies directly from a VCR or videodisc player. It let us pick almost any frame we wanted from prerecorded tapes and discs. The results are in this issue’s “The Year in Tapes” and “The Year in Discs.” Look for an in-depth story about video hard printers in an upcoming issue.

—The Editors

video

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POSTMASTER: Send Address changes to VIDEO, P. O. Box 56293, Boulder, Colorado 80322-6293.



Photo/Herbert Migdoll
Monitor picture The Joffrey Ballet in John Cranko's, "The Taming of the Shrew."

See What You've Been Missing



Proton's 625 Color Stereo Monitor/Receiver
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Introducing the Proton 625 Stereo Monitor/Receiver

One look is all it takes to see the difference between a Proton and other stereo monitor/receivers. There's absolutely no comparison.

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We've built in a number of technical advantages which give Proton monitor/receivers a picture that's superior to all the rest. So you'll see pure blacks and brilliant whites. 15% more picture. More accurate shapes and colors.

And much greater detail with almost 400 lines of "actual" resolution — far exceeding the broadcast industry standard. Plus, our exclusive VNR™ (Video Noise Reduction) System polishes the picture even closer to perfection.

Incomparable stereo sound

What about sound? Also virtually flawless. In fact, Proton's high fidelity stereo sound far surpasses the audio of conventional television. Especially when you add our optional matching two-way, self-powered speakers for even greater impact.

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Fast Forward

Late-Breaking News

Sony Gets Personal

Look for 8mm products to get even smaller, lighter, and easier to use than they already are. Sony, for example, will follow up the introduction of its Auto Handycam (which is a little heavier than the record-only original) with a four-pound 8mm VCR called Page 1, a name meant to signify

creasing its use by individual family members.

"We are convinced 8mm will generate this phenomenon," said Deputy President Masaaki Morita. "The real personalization will begin when we develop more of the concept products only made possible by 8mm." Developing the format, is Sony's "highest corporate priority," he added.



Sony's Page 1 8mm VCR

the start of "the personal video age." Due here soon, possibly this spring, it's already for sale in Japan for about \$650. Sony engineers shrank the power supply and the tuner, added easy snap-on TV connectors, and are aiming it primarily at teens—who would no longer have to compete with mom and dad for the family deck.

Expect, too, a succession of 8mm gadgets that combine small screens, lenses, and recording and playback heads in unfamiliar ways: TV/VCR combos, car video products, a Walkman-style VCR with an LCD screen, etc. Top Sony officials say they want to turn 8mm into a second home video format that will supplement, not replace, VHS by making video appeal to people who have so far avoided it, and by in-

Wind From The East

Japanese video fans are being treated to several interesting new products, some of which should soon cross the ocean. The most fascinating is a Matsushita VCR, the NV-G21, with a digital scanner that reads bar codes, just like those in supermarkets. Users run a pen-like remote control over the code then transmit the programming instructions to the VCR. Some Japanese TV guides cooperate by printing program listings in bar code form. Only one model uses the scanner for now but Matsushita says all its VCRs will eventually have it.

In fact, many companies—including Sanyo, Hitachi, and JVC—are introducing digitally-enhanced VCRs. Toshiba's A-800HFD uses a light

pen to read easy-to-follow programming instructions the VCR shows on a TV, in effect turning any monitor into a touch screen. The pen is linked to the VCR by an optical fiber.

On the camera front, Aiwa and Fuji have Handycam-style 8mm camcorders with one significant difference—a half-pound playback module that snaps onto the bottom of the recorder. This eliminates the need for a Handycam-style playback deck. Aiwa's version, the CD-50, due here this spring, also has an optional remote control with a two-inch black & white playback screen so you can monitor your video's progress.

Tiny TVs are appearing in new shapes. Sharp has a personal stereo player with a two-inch LCD TV screen on the cassette hatch. The whole thing measures 3 by 5 by 1-1/4 inches.

Redefining High-Def

Adventurous TV producers are beginning to use the long-awaited High Definition Television (HDTV) format—which delivers a video picture as good as 35mm film—even though broadcasters can't yet agree on a high-definition transmission standard. Productions filmed in HDTV include a 13-part Canadian miniseries, a German sitcom, a British drama, and an Italian movie. (Sorry, no programs in the U.S. yet). Filmmakers experimenting with the new medium say it provides a sharper TV image even though HDTV tapes have to be converted to meet NTSC standards.

DAT's Just The Beginning

Korea is readying a new contender for the minivideo olympics—a 4mm tape format that uses a minuscule, already standardized digital audio tape (DAT) cassette. Samsung is introducing it this year in Korea in the form of a tiny 2.5-pound, full-featured camcorder that can record up to 80 minutes on the 2 by 1.3 by 0.3 inch cassette. There's no word yet on U.S. plans for the new format, but stay tuned.

Better Than Candy Bars

What happens when a film distributor meets an automatic teller giant? Video vending. Group 1 Entertainment promises its recent deal with Diebold, Inc. will lead to 800 automatic tape dispensers by May, a breakthrough, if true, for the long-sought spread of video vending machines. Group 1's credit-card only "Movie Machines" can rent or sell up to 374 VHS tapes. First installations begin this month in Los Angeles.

The Importance Of Being A Stooge

You can't keep a good stooge down. Soon after our hands-on report about new VCR board games ("Let the Games Begin," Nov. 1986), we learned the Pressman Toy Corporation, which scored with its best-selling *Doorways to Horror*, is adding a *3 Stooges* game using Stooge film clips. Look for Moe, Larry, and Curly this month, in VHS only, for \$24.95.

NEW FROM TDK

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Put a new TDK Extra High Grade video cassette in your VCR and watch the power it unleashes.

Formulated to meet the demands of today's more sophisticated VCRs, TDK E-HG delivers the most impressive performance you've ever seen—even at the more critical slower speeds.

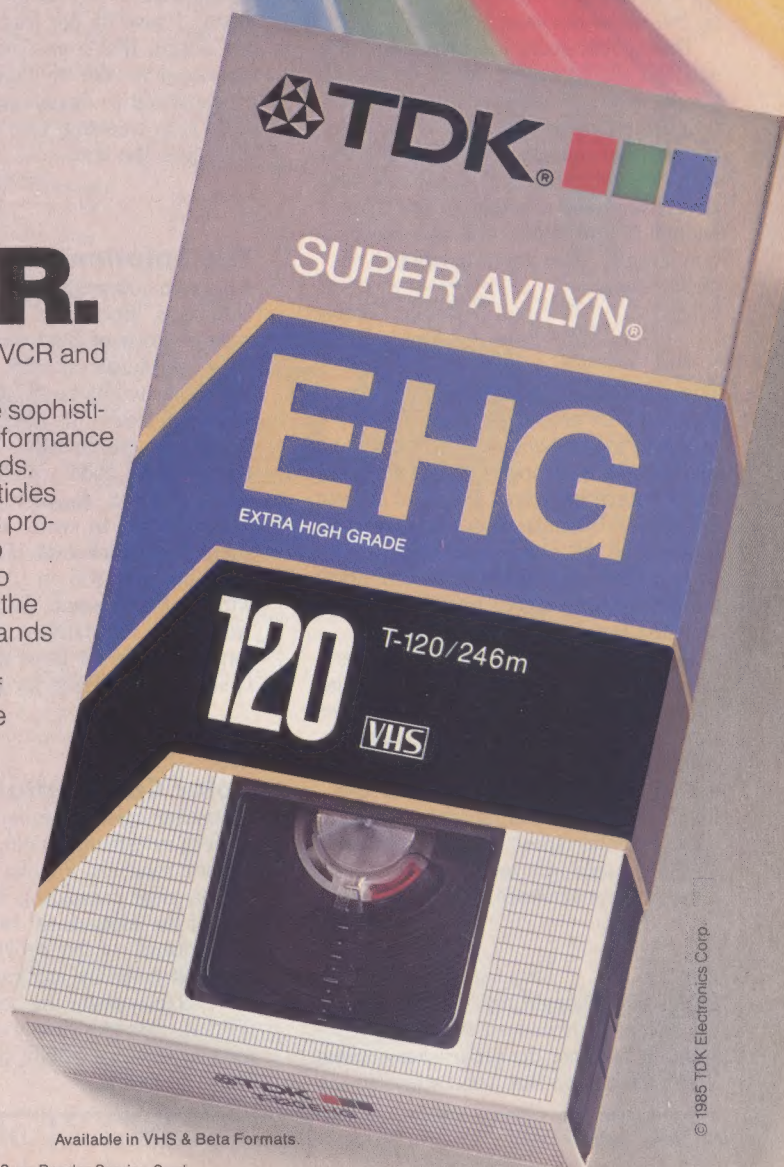
That's because its super-refined Super Avilyn particles enable TDK E-HG to attain a BET value* of 35m²/g. This provides E-HG with a smoother, denser magnetic surface to record on; which results in super-clear colors, ultra-sharp images and superior audio characteristics. E-HG is also the ideal tape for your prized video library, because it withstands the test of time play after play.

And to assure the maximum quality and power of E-HG, we've encased it in a super precision SQ cassette shell mechanism, which helps TDK deliver smoother running, consistently trouble-free performance that virtually surpasses any other brand of video cassette on the market today.

New TDK E-HG. No other extra high grade video cassette has its performance power. Unleash it on your VCR today.



*BET value: The measure indicates the fineness of the magnetic particles contained on a tape expressed in units of square acres per pound (m²/g). The higher the BET value, the finer and more numerous the particles—and the greater the tape's video and audio performance capability.



Available in VHS & Beta Formats.

For additional information, circle No. 3 on Reader Service Card.

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Feedback

Readers Air Their Views

Roar of the Crowd

The good news appeared when I noticed that MGM/UA had lowered the price of one of my favorite movies, *Forbidden Planet*. I charged down to my local video store and bought a copy. The bad news cropped up when I noticed the "Macrovision encoded" message on the label. The picture bounces more than a basketball at an NBA game. Figuring that I had a weak tuner in my year-old Sony KV2665 TV, I called my local serviceman. He said it does not need to be repaired, although he had received a number of similar calls in the last six months. He said that Macrovision disrupts the signals in high-end digital-tuning TVs in much the same way it screws up the signal between two VCRs.

This is ridiculous. I am an honest person who would simply like to be able to purchase a tape and play it on my system. Macrovision and the studios have teamed up to produce a defective high-tech product. Someone is guilty of false advertising, and it seems to me there is enough of a problem to start a class action lawsuit. How about helping to organize one?

George Lambert
Montara, Calif.

When are video people going to learn that the best protection against piracy is to adjust to the habits of customers and offer products at prices that make stealing counterproductive? Personal computer software manufacturers learned that lesson well. Most have removed their copy protection and lowered their prices; anyone who copies now probably wouldn't buy the product anyway.

As long as movie companies have a stranglehold on this business we are going to go through cycles of copy protection/decoder/new copy protection/new decoder. . . ad nauseum. This is where I get off. Until this is resolved, I'll read books instead of renting tapes. When I dubbed rental tapes, it was to time-shift so that I could pick up and return movies at my convenience, not the stores'.

Ed Quinlan
Park Forest, Ill.

When I first bought my VCR and rented my second videotape, I was unable to watch it because the picture was rolling. When I took the tape back and com-

plained, the store told me about the copy protection. I spent about \$50 for a used stabilizer so that I could watch tapes, and I need to use it for one of every five. The results are still poor—the stabilized picture suffers from severe flagging.

I respect the movie industry's right to protect its products, but I wish it would respect my right to a reasonable product for a fair price. I don't think it is too much to ask film companies to label their tapes with a big "M" or something. At least we would know what we're not getting.

Charles S. Grasser
Jjamville, Md.

I think Macrovision is great. With the money I save by not renting or buying any Thorn, MCA, or CBS/Fox titles, I can afford to take my family on more trips and out to dinner more often. If I could stop smoking, too, who knows? The sky's the limit.

David M. Lagerholm
Greenville, S.C.

The Solution?

I have to comment on two letters in October's "Feedback." Doug Edelen says his copy of *Back to the Future* looks wonderful on VHS, while Richard Hanners says he buys tapes but will switch to laser if he keeps being disappointed by Macrovision. If Doug thinks *Future* looks good on VHS, he should see it on laser. And if Richard is looking for an excuse to switch to laser, think about this: *Back to the Future* is \$80 on tape, but only \$35 on LV, and that's without Macrovision. Someday everyone will realize that tape, no matter what format, is fine for most things, but that LaserVision is made for the collector.

Fred Forester
Yucaipa, Calif.

Color Commentary

Computer colorization is the tip of the iceberg in refining an old, worn-out, prehistoric medium. Popular sentiment seems to be comparing it to spiking the hair of the Mona Lisa. But the benefit (or problem) of this process can be cancelled at home by any viewer smart enough to operate the color knob on a TV set. (Maybe Woody Allen can't afford to have somebody come over to his house to find it.)

Aren't the critics missing something? Like the care film researchers go through to restore as much of the original print as possible? Or colorization's ability to clean up the print on video before the hues are added? Splice marks, blotches, age marks, and streaks can be dealt with frame-by-frame. Without the desire to send these old reels to the colorizer, these refinements just don't get done.

Peter D. Thompson
Jeffersonville, Ind.

Bird Bath

Thanks for representing the interests of dish owners in the fight against satellite scrambling while your competitors sit on the fence. While legislation concerning scrambling will be passed eventually, we can only hope the laws will be fair. While the right to scramble cannot be challenged, it should be left to the skill of individuals to decrypt such information for personal use, excepting violations of national security. Please increase your coverage of this frontier area.

Vincent Mills
Medford, Ore.

Bob Brewin ("Off the Air," October 1986) says dish owners get "a hard time and a bum rap from the satellite TV industry." Sorry, but it's the cable industry and the programmers that are responsible for the outrageous program prices. The only people who have tried to offer discounted programming have been quickly put out of business by HBO or Showtime.

HBO charges cable companies \$3 per service per month and has offered to drop it to \$1 if they sign up enough suckers. If it offered dish owners that price the company might sign up enough people so that it wouldn't have to worry about scrambling its signal.

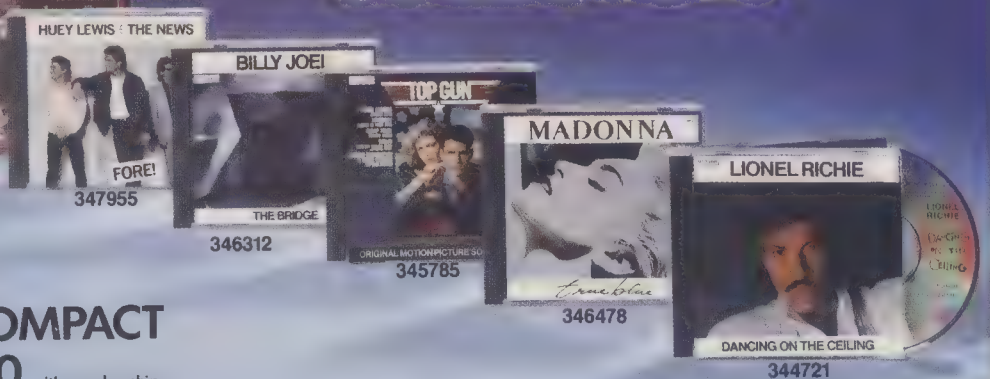
Glenn Grubb
Chubbock, Idaho

Bike a Virgin

We respect the right of Lindsay Van Gelder ("Ten Speed Video," August 1986) to her opinion but feel she did not review *Bicycling America* intelligently or fairly. First, she reviewed three Cycle Vision tapes but only one *Bicycling America*, although three volumes have been out since March. She writes, "Ac-

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246868. Jim Croce—Photographs And Memories—His Greatest Hits. Time In A Bottle; etc. (Saja)

343822. Prince And The New Power Generation—Parade. Music from "Under the Cherry Moon." (Paisley Park)

349530. The Monkees—Then And Now...The Best Of The Monkees. Includes the new hit: That Was Then, This Is Now; etc. (Arista)

346205. Belinda Carlisle—Belinda. Includes Mod About You, many more. (I.R.S.)

286914. Fleetwood Mac—Rumours, #1 Hit Album. Includes Don't Stop, You Make Loving Fun; more. (Warner Bros.)

348706. Wynton Marsalis—J Moods. Much Later; Melodique; more. (Digital—Columbia)

347245. Spyro Gyra—Breakout. Freefall; etc. (MCA)

346270. Wham! Music From The Edge Of Heaven. In Your Man; more. (Columbia)

345777. Peter Gabriel—So. Includes Sledgehammer; In Your Eyes; more. (Geffen)

344812. Billy Ocean—Love Zone. #1 album & hits. Includes Love Zone; more. (Jive/Arista)

347054. David Lee Roth—Eat 'Em And Smile. (Warner Bros.)

334391. Whitney Houston—Whitney Houston. Greatest Love Of All; etc. (Arista)

347492. Glenn Miller Orchestra—In The Digital Mood. New! Includes Miller—Big Band hits: In The Mood; Tuxedo Junction; more. (Digital—GRP)

333286. Phil Collins—No Jacket Required. Album of the Year! (Atlantic)

339200. Stevie Wonder—In Square Circle. #1 album. (Tamil)

343319. Janet Jackson—Control. #1 album. What Have You Done For Me Lately; more. (A&M)

318089. Michael Jackson—Thriller. Billy Jean; etc. (Epic)

320499. The Police—Synchronicity. Winner of 3 Grammy Awards! (A&M)

314443. Neil Diamond's 12 Greatest Hits, Vol. 2. You Don't Bring Me Flowers (with Barbra Streisand); etc. (Columbia)

219477. Simon & Garfunkel's Greatest Hits. El Condor Pasa; etc. (Columbia)

308049. Creedence Clearwater Revival Featuring John Fogerty/Chronicle. Greatest hits. (Fantasy)

343582. Van Halen—5150. (Warner Bros.)

339226. Gershwin: Rhapsody In Blue; Second Rhapsody; etc. —M. Tilson Thomas, Los Angeles Phil. (Digital—CBS Masterworks)

336222. Dire Straits—Brothers In Arms. A #1 album! Money For Nothing, others. (Warner Bros.)

345553. Branford Marsalis—Romance for Saxophone. Top 10! English Chamber Orchestra (Digital—CBS Masterworks)

343947. Tony Bennett—The Art Of Excellence. Includes Everybody Has the Blues (duet with Ray Charles); more. (Digital—Columbia)

343327. Wynton Marsalis—Jolivet/Tomas: Trumpet Concertos. Philharmonia Orchestra. (Digital—CBS Masterworks)

336396-396390. Billy Joel's Greatest Hits, Volumes 1 & 2. (Counts as 2—Columbia)

337519. Heart. Top 10 Album. What About Love; Never; etc. (Capitol)

345827. Bob James and David Sanborn—Double Vision. Joined by Al Jarreau, others. Includes Since I Fell For You. (Warner Bros.)

341305. Robert Palmer—Riptide. Addicted to Love; more. (Island)

288670. Barry Manilow—Greatest Hits. It's a Miracle; Mandy; etc. (Arista)

343095. Philip Glass—Songs From Liquid Days. Lyrics by Paul Simon; David Byrne; etc. Featuring Linda Ronstadt. (CBS)

321380. Barbra Streisand's Greatest Hits, Vol. II. Includes—The Way We Were; more. (Columbia)

323261. Lionel Richie—Can't Slow Down. All Night Long; etc. (Motown)

340323. Sade—Promise. #1 Smash. (Portrait)

326629. Bruce Springsteen—Born In the U.S.A. (Columbia)

342097. Barbra Streisand—The Broadway Album. Somewhere, Something's Coming; more. (Columbia)



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cording to a company spokesman, Cycle Vision Tours is. . .” Pegasus Productions was never given a call.

Van Gelder failed to see the difference between *Bicycling America* and Cycle Vision. Ours was designed as an entertaining bicycle travelogue. We found that a real time ride was boring—roads, trees, and bushes look the same whether they’re in New Hampshire or Oregon. We condensed the ride so the viewer

doesn’t see the boring stretches of road. When *Bicycling America* does what real bicyclers do, which is stop and hike to areas you can’t see from the road, she derides us for stopping to show the scenery. Our viewers realize that getting good views means having to keep on exercising while the video bikers stop.

We assume our viewers have a modicum of intelligence and a normal sense of balance. They know watching a tour

on TV is not real and won’t fall off their bikes. And as for her name calling, anyone who falls off an exercise bike while watching TV has no right to label the tape “dumb.”

Diana H.O. Long
Pegasus Productions
Ashland, Ore.

Lindsay Van Gelder replies: Although nowhere in my article do I claim to have “fallen off my bike,” I do plead guilty to being an out-of-shape klutz. So are a lot of other people who ride exercise bicycles in the privacy of their homes instead of running around the park in their gym shorts. (And plenty of the remaining indoor bike riders are serious athletes in training—not people who are looking for “entertainment” travelogues.) To the extent to which some readers would prefer a travelogue type program, I believe they received enough information in my review about the differences between the two tapes to make up their own minds.

Contrary to your letter, I did speak to someone in your office in late February or early March to double check the price of the video. She did not mention the other videos in the series; if she had, I would have been happy to look at them.

Consenting Adults


“Dear Dad, Sign Here” (“Fast Forward,” November 1986) may be unfair to our company in what it doesn’t say. In March 1984, our company decided the industry would do well to use parental consent forms voluntarily rather than wait for government intervention. To that end our 750 stores require signed parental consent forms on file if parents wish their children to rent PG-13 or R rated titles. I’ve spoken on this issue a number of times and our position was published in many publications, including VIDEO.

Ron Berger
President, National Video
Portland, Ore.

Addenda

The chart in December’s “Stereo TV Finally Catches On” should have included Proton’s 19-inch 619 for \$749 and 20-inch 620 for \$849. Both models have 139 channel tuning, 3 watts per channel, and full-featured remotes. The price of Toshiba’s CZ2094 should have read \$1380.

“Picking the Right TV and Monitor/Receiver” (December) continued from page 67 to page 152.

The prices in December’s “TV Den” for components of the Rabbit VCR Multiplying System should read as follows: \$89.95 for the transmitter and receiver, which are only sold together, and \$44.95 for each additional receiver. 

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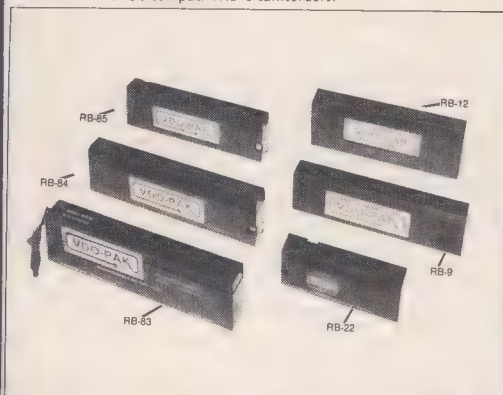
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ROCKY	0563172	BUTCH CASSIDY AND THE SUNDANCE KID	0517302	WARGAMES	0828002	THE BRIDGE ON THE RIVER KWAI	1606062
THE TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE	3305062	CHARLOTTE'S WEB	2095022	GREMLINS	6082082	TO CATCH A THIEF	2050052
THE HOWLING	0527202	FORT APACHE	5526042	IT'S A WONDERFUL LIFE	3256052	ENEMY MINE	3584082
THE BIG CHILL	1527022	THE GOOD, THE BAD AND THE UGLY	0582222	DUMBO	5251052	MOONRAKER	0677102
RAGING BULL	0500132	GUYS AND DOLLS	3533002	EDDIE MURPHY-DELIRIOUS	2055182	JANE FONDA'S NEW WORKOUT	5112042
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THE CARE BEARS MOVIE	7110022	PALE RIDER	6097012			A VIEW TO A KILL	0989052
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OLD YELLER	5289012	REDS	2029032			CRUISING	3500252
A CHORUS LINE	3193012	THE BLACK STALLION	0504012			THE GOLDEN VOYAGE OF SINBAD	1653082
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AIRPLANE	2033232	CAT BALLOU	1545002
TEEN WOLF	4104072	AMERICAN GIGOLO	2030002
STAR TREK III—THE SEARCH FOR SPOCK	2016182	THE SWORD IN THE STONE	5409062
NORTH TO ALASKA	7310002	MAD MAX BEYOND THUNDERDOME	6089012
THE SEVEN SAMURAI	3108052	ROBIN HOOD	5299092
THE KARATE KID	1710092	GHOSTBUSTERS	1742012
ALL ABOUT EVE	0044082	"10"	0011072
HELLO DOLLY	0699052	ALIEN	0002322
FOOTLOOSE	2019052	THE GODFATHER—PART II	0018002
THE RUSSIANS ARE COMING	0948052	SPLASH	5304022
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THE WAY WE WERE	1529002	WITNESS FOR THE PROSECUTION	0717122
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ON GOLDEN POND	0523162	LA CAGE AUX FOLLES	0512012
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THE MAGNIFICENT SEVEN	0534212		
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48 HOURS	2022182		
A SOLDIER'S STORY	1733282		
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THE SUNSET STRIP	1603092		
THE KILLING FIELDS	6084062		
FROM RUSSIA WITH LOVE	0690212		
TRADING PLACES	2017152		
THE FRENCH CONNECTION	0042422		
NATIONAL LAMPDON'S EUROPEAN VACATION	6096022		
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LAWRENCE OF ARABIA	1514072		
KING KONG (ORIGINAL)	5502022		
SATURDAY NIGHT FEVER	2020282		
GREASE	2074072		
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The Gazette

EDITED BY IRA ROBBINS



Rebecca de Mornay and Geraldine Page in *The Trip to Bountiful*.

Like everybody else who has seen it, Geraldine Page is very positive about *The Trip to Bountiful*. "Didn't you just love it?" she asked when we spoke recently. "The script is so wonderful. I had such a good time!" Of course, as the film's Oscar-winning star, her fun included making the movie.

Page plays a housebound widow—living with her son and daughter-in-law—who runs off to see her hometown before it's too late. The movie gave her the chance to create another of her patented character roles, and another opportunity to work with Horton Foote, whose adaption of William Faulkner's *The Old Man* she had done on *Playhouse 90*. "I've always loved Horton's work and I saw the stage play of [*The Trip to Bountiful*] in the 1950s with Lillian Gish. My memory of her is very vivid. I was so thrilled to be asked to do this. Anything else he wants me to do, I'm ready."

Bountiful's credits reveal another clue to Foote's popularity with Page, and to the wonderful ensemble acting: the cast is filled with the families of the actors, the di-

The Oscar-Winning Odyssey of GERALDINE PAGE

rector, and producer. "Horton really believes in that," Page explains. "He was there with his wife and son; Hallie [Foote's daughter and star of his *On Valentine's Day*] came for a visit. I was so happy when my own children [Tony and John Torn] could come and be in it. If the timing had been right, my daughter and grandson would have been in it, too."

The "familiarity" of *Bountiful* is appropriate in what is, finally, the sort of serious and adult "family" movie thought extinct. Considering its appeal, Page says, "So many people identified with the running-away thing. Some have been absolutely astounded that their youngsters like it, but I think that's part of their being able to enjoy it—the idea of getting away."

Page's next project is currently shooting in New Jersey: "a film called *Single Room* with Don Ameche, Shelley Winters, and Rita Tushingham. It takes place in an old people's home and is about two people who take a shine to each other and one who doesn't think they should. I love it." Given her track record with films she loves working on, I can't wait.

—M. George Stevenson

Movies Get into (Video) Gear

You know home video has become a pervasive medium when it turns up as a featured player in major motion pictures. Equipment freaks may want to check some of these out of the local video store:

Videodrome (human VCR)

Down and Out in Beverly Hills (camcorder and VCR)

Body Double (VCR/TV set-up)

Terrorvision (satellite dish)

Poltergeist (TV)

How Superman Really Flies



Chris Reeve is a guy who knows what's flying...literally! When he's not up-up-and-awaying as the Man of Steel, it's likely you'll find him in the cockpit of his own personal Baron, which he uses for transportation everywhere. In *Touch the Sky*, Reeve takes the throttle of a Navy fighter jet alongside the legendary Blue Angels.

"It was the most exciting flight of my entire life," says Reeve, a licensed pilot since age 23. "I flew in formation during the stunt show and was really pumped up about it. The whole thing was incredible."

When he's not busy defying death, Reeve is either working out in his New York apartment, practicing piano at his Massachusetts retreat, or getting into character for his latest role. The current one has him in London, where he's again donning the red cape and boots.

"The decision to play Super-

man was the most courageous career move that I made," Reeve recalls. "At the time, the idea of a Superman film was laughable to most people. The challenge was to turn their expectations around."

Superman IV, due for release in December 1987, is again set in Metropolis, the all-purpose hi-tech city. Will the series become a perennial, with as many "episodes" as James Bond or Sherlock Holmes? "Oh, I don't think so," smiles Reeve. "I don't think there's that many stories." Perhaps not, but it's more likely that the multi-faceted Reeve would just get bored, especially after starring in diverse roles from *Deathtrap* to the romantic time-travel story, *Somewhere in Time*.

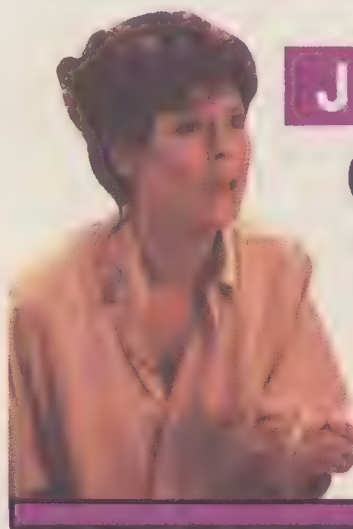
Reeve already has his future well planned. "The next film I'd like to do would be a comedy," he says. "So far, I've only really done comedy in the theater. Then I'd like to move onto directing." —Clifford Meth

JoBeth Williams, the versatile actress who did battle with fiendish thingies in *Poltergeist* and its sequel admits to skepticism about the supernatural, but can't close the book on the subject. "Once, in an old house in New Hampshire," she explains, "I woke up in the middle of the night, and while I thought I was dreaming, the bed was shaking. I thought it was an earthquake, but the woman who owned the boarding house said, quite casually, 'Oh no, it's just our ghost.' My feeling is it's not an area you should tamper with unless you know what you're doing."

Believer or not, Williams appreciates the tremendous impact *Poltergeist* has had. Although she leans toward the big screen—"there's something about the scope which makes it even more scary"—Williams also recognizes that millions of home viewers can't be wrong. "So many people, kids particularly, have rented it that it must still have tremendous impact, even on TV."

What of *Poltergeist III*? Williams says she is not interested, despite rumors that the beasts will rise again. "As far as I know they're not writing it now. I won't say would never do it because you always live to eat those kinds of words."

Not currently committed to any specific projects, the star of such films as *American Dreamer*, *The Big Chill*, *Desert Bloom*, and TV's *Adam and Adam: The Song Continues* is exploring a number of creative avenues. Williams and her husband, director John Pasquin, are searching out works to produce, preferably made-for-TV movies or low-budget features. But the actress is also looking for a few good comedies. "It's a side I haven't



JOBETH'S GHOST STORY

been able to use a lot in film," she says, "and I'm frustrated that there aren't more comedies being written for women." Rather than teen comedies or broad "*Animal House*, *Police Academy* stuff," she would love to find more sophisticated, urbane material.

Returning to the subject of big vs. small screen, Williams notes that cable and the VCR have enabled people ("like my mother") who wouldn't go out to the movies to see films they would otherwise miss. "People who were, are still going out, but it's now easier for families, sick people, kids, and everybody to have them available."

—Rod Granger

The Gazette

For all his stately, serious movies, for all his operas and classical plays, renowned stage and film director Franco Zeffirelli is simply a sunny *paisan*. "Opera began as a popular medium," he enthuses. "When it stopped being that and became more elite was in some ways the end of opera. Always, to be successful, an opera has to be liked by the audiences. The audiences saved many masterpieces that were blasted by the critics: *Don Giovanni*, *The Barber of Seville*, *La Traviata*, *Carmen*, *Aida*," he reels off. "Audiences said, 'No, these are masterpieces and we like them.'"

Audiences worldwide say the same of Zeffirelli's staging of such works, and of his films of such classical plays as *Romeo and Juliet* and the Taylor/Burton *Taming of the Shrew*. The 66-year-old director's two forays into Hollywood—1979's *The Champ* and 1981's *Endless Love*—were, to put it kindly, a little less well-received. No matter. The L.A. Times recently listed Zeffirelli's staging of *La Traviata* as the #1-selling opera video. His 1982 production of *La Boheme* ranked sixth. A future addition may be his opulent film production of Verdi's *Otello*, recently released to upbeat reviews.



FRANCO ZEFFIRELLI

MR. OPERA

"Movies and TV and video are good not only for bringing opera to many people who might like to try it," Zeffirelli observes, "but also perhaps for opening up the minds of young potential performers. Seeing an opera on video may not be the ideal, but it's better than not seeing it at all. Perhaps people see one act, or one number. I don't mind. Videocassettes are like records that way."

—Frank Lovece

Top 40

KID VIDEO

1. *Alice in Wonderland* (1). 1951. 75m. \$29.95. Disney.
2. *Sleeping Beauty* (—). 1959. 75m. \$29.95. Disney.
3. *Pinocchio* (2). 1940. 87m. \$29.95. Disney.
4. *Dumbo* (5). 1941. 64m. \$29.95. Disney.
5. *The Sword In The Stone* (—). 1963. 79m. \$79.98. Disney.
6. *Robin Hood* (10). 1973. 83m. \$29.95. Disney.
7. *Pound Puppies* (4). 1985. 37m. \$14.95. Family.
8. *Winnie the Pooh and the Honey Tree* (8). 1965. 25m. \$14.95. Disney.
9. *Winnie the Pooh and Tigger Too* (6). 1974. 25m. \$14.95. Disney.
10. *Pete's Dragon* (—). 1977. 128m. \$29.95. Disney.

CASSETTE RENTALS

1. *Down and Out in Beverly Hills* (—). 1986. 103m. (R) \$79.95. Touchstone.
2. *Out of Africa* (1). 1985. 161m. (PG) \$79.95. MCA.
3. *Pretty in Pink* (—). 1986. 96m. (PG-13) \$79.95. Paramount.
4. *F/X* (—). 1986. 108m. (R). \$79.95. HBO/Cannon.
5. *Gung Ho* (2). 1986. 111m. (PG-13) \$79.95. Paramount.
6. *Wildcats* (—). 1986. 106m. (R) \$79.95. Warner.
7. *9 1/2 Weeks* (—). 1986. 116m. (R) \$79.95. MGM/UA.
8. *Runaway Train* (—). 1985. 112m. (R) \$79.95. MGM/UA.
9. *Young Sherlock Holmes* (—). 1985. 109m. (PG-13) \$79.95. Paramount.
10. *The Money Pit* (—). 1986. 91m. (PG) \$79.95. MCA.

CASSETTE SALES

1. *Sleeping Beauty* (—). 1959. 75m. (G). \$29.95. Disney.
2. *Jane Fonda's New Workout* (1). 1985. 90m. \$39.95. Karl.
3. *Jane Fonda's Low Impact Aerobic Workout* (—). 1985. 50m. \$39.95. Karl.
4. *The Sound of Music* (2). 1965. 174m. (G) \$29.98. CBS/Fox.
5. *The Music Man* (6). 1962. 151m. (G) \$24.98. Warner.
6. *Alice in Wonderland* (5). 1951. 65m. (G) \$29.95. Disney.
7. *Amadeus* (8). 1984. 160m. (PG) \$29.95. HBO/Cannon.
8. *Pinocchio* (—). 1940. 84m. (G) \$29.95. Disney.
9. *Playboy Video Centerfold #3* (—). 1986. 30m. \$9.95. Karl.
10. *Star Trek: The Cage* (—). 1966. 65m. \$29.95. Paramount.

VIDEODISC SALES

1. *The Jewel of the Nile* (3). 1985. 106m. (PG-13) LV \$34.98. CBS/Fox.
2. *Back to the Future* (1). 1985. 116m. (PG) LV \$34.98. MCA.
3. *Cocoon* (—). 1985. 117m. (PG-13) LV \$34.98. CED \$29.98. CBS/Fox.
4. *The Music Man* (—). 1962. 151m. (G) LV \$34.98. Warner.
5. *Brazil* (—). 1986. 131m. (R) LV \$34.98. Embassy.
6. *Spies Like Us* (7). 1985. 103m. (PG) LV \$79.95. Warner.
7. *Out of Africa* (—). 1986. 161m. (PG) LV \$34.98. MCA.
8. *Murphy's Romance* (2). 1985. 107m. (PG-13) LV, CED \$29.95. RCA/Columbia.
9. *Quicksilver* (—). 1986. 106m. (PG) LV \$29.95. RCA/Columbia.
10. *Witness* (9). 1985. 113m. (R) LV, CED \$29.95. Paramount.



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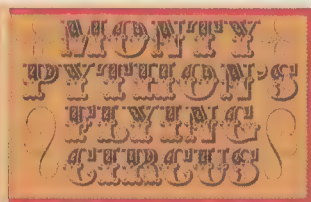
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Ministry of Silly Video



And now for something completely familiar. Those who have been aching to add the Piranha Brothers, the Ministry of Silly Walks, and the Dead Parrot to their video collections should take heart. Those who don't know what we're talking about, be warned: *Monty Python's Flying Circus* is finally coming to video.



The British television series, which had passed over such possible titles as *Owl Stretching Time* and *A Horse, a Spoon and a Bucket*, was created by five Britons and an expatriate American from Minneapolis. It was a television groundbreaker that combined eccentric sketch comedy (a clinic where you pay to argue, be insulted, or be hit on the head) with bizarre animation (a baby carriage that devours passersby). It came to America via public television in 1974 but was never available on tape until now. "We didn't know when the best time to release them

was," says Python animator-turned-film-director Terry Gilliam. "Since we got the rights to the show a while ago, we've been discussing the best way to present them. We could have sold to network TV and made a lot of money, but we finally said, forget it. We wanted them to go out without commercial breaks."

The group decided to sign with Paramount Home Video after Python representatives met with Timothy Clott, the company's senior veep in charge of home video. Not only had Clott been very successful with his carefully packaged and advertised *Star Trek* videos, he was also a knowledgeable Python fan from way back.

"They were encouraged," says Clott, "and they were happy with our marketing plans." Paramount will release two 60-minute volumes at \$24.95 apiece every three months. Each will contain two episodes linked thematically, not chronologically, and each will be packaged with bizarre Gilliam artwork.

"There are diehard Python fanatics in every marketplace," notes Clott.

The same fans will also be happy to learn that a *Flying Circus* first cousin is also

coming to video: *Fawlty Towers*. The 12-episode sitcom was created by Python John Cleese after a stay at an English seaside hotel. "The manager was so rude he was fascinating," recalls Cleese. "He thought the guests were sent along to annoy him and prevent him from running the hotel."

That became the basis for this frantic farce, among the most hilarious—if short-lived—comedies ever made for television. Late guests,

angry guests, even dead guests all get the same bad-tempered treatment from hotel owner Basil Fawlty (Cleese), aided and frustrated by his sharp-tongued wife, Sybil, his clever assistant, Polly, and his nitwitted Spanish waiter, Manuel. The series, taped in 1975 and 1979, ended when Cleese became bored with it, and is now coming to video in its entirety from CBS/Fox as part of the BBC's 50th anniversary celebration. —Tom Soter

No-Fat Pat

Squeaky-clean rock 'n' roll crooner Pat Boone, now 52, is a lifelong physical fitness buff. Three decades after working up '50s teens with such romantic hits as "Love Letters in the Sand," Boone is bringing exercise video to the "mature adult" market, in the recently-released *Take Time with Pat Boone, Featuring Connie Letney* cassette.

For Boone—who attributes his remarkably youthful looks to milk, exercise, and a clean conscience—his target audience represents an "untouched market segment" in need of a "low impact, easy and gentle" exercise program instead of the "high voltage, jolting and jumping" routines repeatedly offered by the woman seemingly most opposite from him.

"I admire and congratulate Jane Fonda for her work," says Boone. "She should get some kind of national award, but she aims for a much younger crowd. I can keep up with her but most people my age can't."

While *Take Time* is Boone's first videocassette, he's developing a children's video line based on his book, *Bible Stories for the Very Young*.

"There's a big demand for high-quality content in children's product," he says. As for the young at heart, the release of vintage performances from his '50s and early '60s TV variety shows is hampered by "residual and payment complications," though he notes that "Gleason and Caesar have proven that these things can be worked out." Meanwhile, he's planning additional exercise programs, with more personal involvement. "I hope to produce the music myself, maybe using 'Ain't That a Shame' for the warm-up, 'Tutti Frutti' during the workout, and 'April Love' for the cool-down!"

—Jim Bessman

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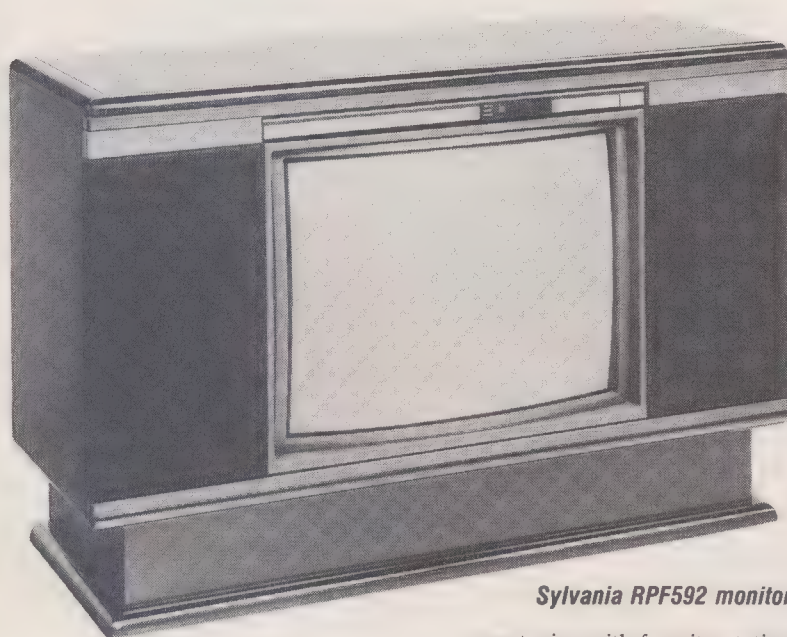
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New Products



Sylvania RPF592 monitor/receiver

Sylvania Stereo TVs Feature SuperRemotes

Sylvania's two new stereo monitor/receivers, the 20-inch RKF195 and the 27-inch RPF592, feature SuperRemote controls that also control 29 brands of VCRs. Both sets have an SAP stereo decoder, stereo speakers, and a four-watt-per-channel amplifier. The 20-inch monitor has a flat square tube, and a room light monitor that adjusts the picture color and contrast according to the illumination in a room. It has 152-channel capability, pushbutton programmable

scan tuning with favorite station scan, and audio/video input and output jacks.

The 27-inch console comes with the SuperRemote-44, which also controls most cable boxes. It also features 178-channel tuning, expanded onscreen displays, a sleep timer, a parental channel lock, personal preference programming for most remote functions, and an expanded audio switch for fuller sound. It is housed in a glossy black veneer cabinet.

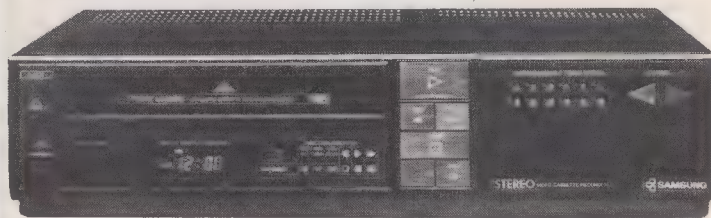
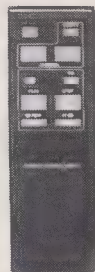
Prices: RKF195, between \$700 and \$750; RPF592, \$1495.

For additional information, circle no. 151 on Reader Service Card.

Samsung Offers Economical Stereo VCR

Samsung's Medalist VR2500L VHS VCR offers a rotary two-head recording playback system and linear stereo playback, with stereo recording possible through a separate MTS tuner. The unit has 110-channel cable-compatible tuning with 12 station presets, 14-day/6-event programming, still frame in SP and EP modes, and picture search in all speeds. The wireless remote has 10 keys and 13 functions.

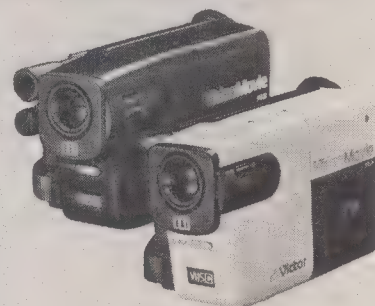
Price: \$459.95



For additional information, circle no. 153 on Reader Service Card.

JVC Shrinks Compact VHS To 2.2 Pounds

JVC is celebrating the tenth anniversary of VHS with a new camcorder, the GR-C9 Mini VideoMovie. The Compact VHS record-only unit is the lightest camcorder yet, at only 2.2 pounds with tape and battery. The rechargeable battery pack doubles as a camera grip to reduce space and weight. According to JVC, the GR-C9's Pan-Focus system automatically focuses from one meter to infinity, and has macro capability. The CCD image sensor and HQ circuitry record in light as low as 10 lux. The camcorder also features automatic white balance and a power-linked automatic lens shutter.



The separate accessory kit includes grip batteries BN-V5G and BN-V6G, AC power adapter and battery charger AA-V2, and cassette adapter C-P5. The GR-C9 will be available this spring.

Price: not available.

For additional information, circle no. 152 on Reader Service Card.



**The first VCR that
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In this imperfect world, some videocassette recordings look worse than others. That's why NEC invented the new DX-2000U. It's the world's first VCR with Digital Noise Reduction — a computerized system that actually improves the picture.

On the left is a dramatization of a noisy videocassette. (Noise can arise from repeated playing, off-air recording,

copying, etc.) You can see snow, grain, and glitches. On the right is the effect of the same tape, as it would be played on NEC's DX-2000U. The snow has melted. The fuzz has fled. And the glitches are gone. Digital Noise Reduction not only improves the picture on bad tapes, it helps even well-recorded tapes look their best.

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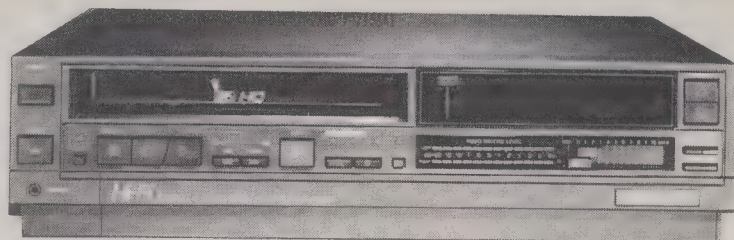
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NEC Home Electronics (U.S.A.), Inc., 1255 Michael Drive, Wood Dale, IL 60191

JVC Goes Digital With New VHS VCR

JVC's HR-D570U VHS VCR is its first to feature digital effects, including digital freeze (still frame with audio), a two-speed strobe effect, solarization, and one-eighth, one quarter and double speed playback with audio. The unit boasts a 181-channel cable-compatible tuner, 14-day/8-event programming, HQ enhancement, ■ double-azimuth four-head system, and ■ luminance signal comb filter for improved resolution. The remote control operates digital effects, audio monitor selection, random access and up/down channel tuning, and timer programming.

Audio highlights include VHS Hi-Fi with a 90 decibel dynamic range and ■ recording level control, a new audio



Scott SVR-504S VHS VCR

Scott Goes High and Low with VHS VCRs.

H.H. Scott has introduced two new VHS VCRs, the high-end SVR-504S and the low-end SVR-110, with HQ circuitry. The 110 is a two-head machine with a 15-function remote, 14-day/8-event programming, 16 channel presets, and auto power on when a tape is inserted. The

504S has a seven-head design, Hi-Fi sound, an MTS/SAP stereo decoder, a 27-function remote, a 139-channel cable-compatible tuner, and 14-day/8-event programming.

Prices: SVR-110, \$479.95; SVR-504S, \$849.95.

For additional information, circle no. 154 on Reader Service Card.

switching noise reduction system, an MTS stereo decoder, FM simulcast recording, record mute, and a headphone jack with level control.

Price: not available.

For additional information, circle no. 155 on Reader Service Card.

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Magazines also agree the F.R.E.D. family of decoders transforms your ordinary TV into an up-to-date stereo center at a fraction of the cost of a new MTS Stereo TV. And F.R.E.D. also synthesizes dynamic stereo sound from non-stereo broadcasts. Available in amplified and non-amplified versions for use with a home audio system or self-powered speakers. Some models with SAP bi-lingual programming capability. So experience the F.R.E.D. family—the greatest breakthrough in MTS Stereo technology.

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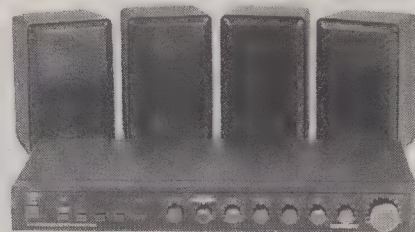
New Products

Surround Yourself with Universal Sound System

Universal's V-9100 surround sound system features a surround decoder with an amplifier and four full-response speakers. In addition to decoding surround effects from prerecorded tapes, the V-9100 converts any audio source to front and rear surround, and converts mono sound from any TV or VCR to an expanded stereo effect. The system features dynamic noise reduction (DNR), LED sound level readouts, and bass, treble, balance, and rear speaker volume controls.

Price: \$299.

For additional information, circle no. 156 on Reader Service Card.

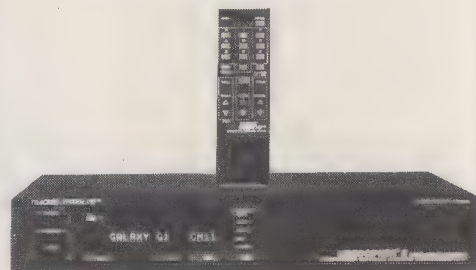


Satellite Receiver and Descrambler Integrated

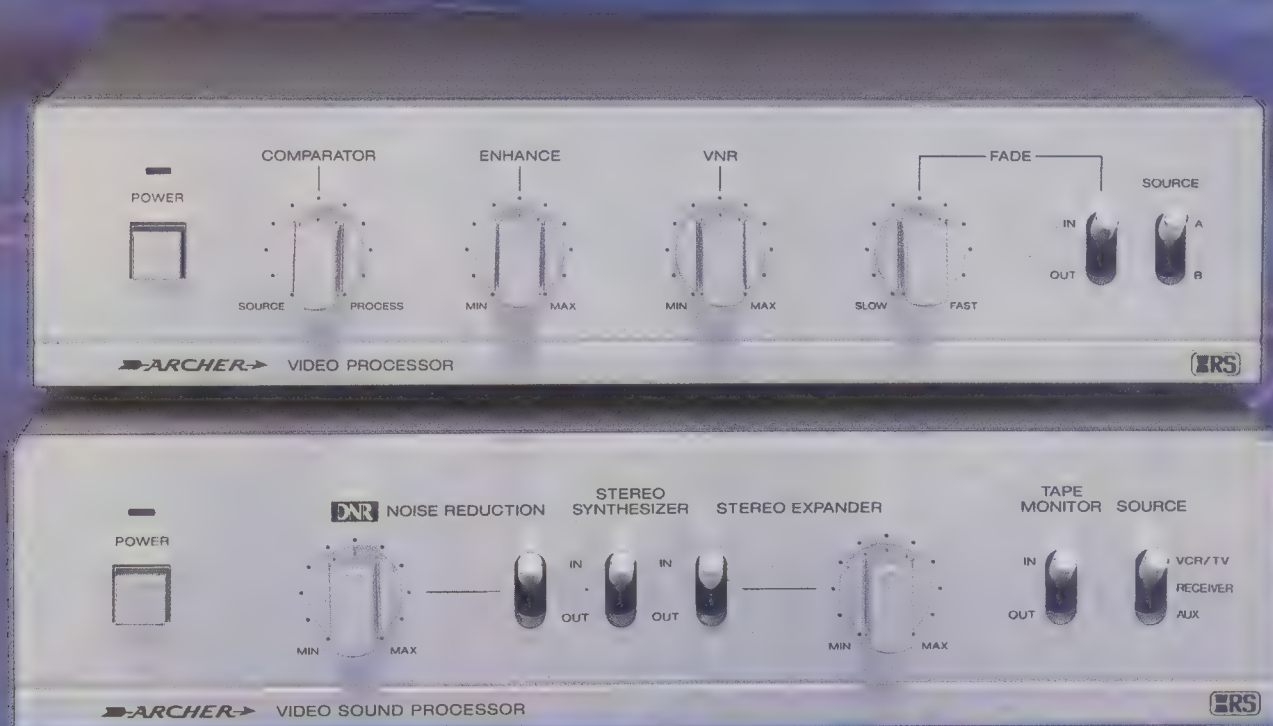
Houston Satellite's Tracker System VIII combines a satellite receiver, antenna positioner, and VideoCipher II descrambler in one unit. It has a 256K memory that recalls pre-programmed polarity settings, channel tuning, stereo and mono audio frequencies, and up to 100 "favorite channels." Parental channel lock, a VCR recording timer, and a full-function remote are also featured, while noise reduction circuitry improves performance on weak signals and resists terrestrial interference. The onscreen display indicates channel, satellite, audio tuning, signal strength, volume setting, dish position, polarity, and also the instructions for setting up the integrated receiver/descrambler.

Price: n.a.

For additional information, circle no. 157 on Reader Service Card.



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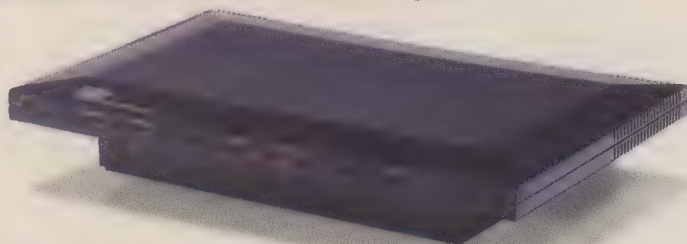
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For additional information, circle No. 13 on Reader Service Card.

New Products

Toshiba VCR Boasts Digital Effects

Toshiba's new DX-3 VHS VCR, like its DX-7 VCR (see "Videotests") uses digital circuitry to produce clear still frames, two-speed slow motion, and two-speed picture search, and to instantly freeze pictures from broadcast TV. The DX-3 is a two-head model with HQ Pro circuitry, including chroma and luminance noise reduction, and detail and white clip enhancement. The unit has 124-channel, cable-compatible voltage-synthesized tuning, along with 4-event/14-day programming, a 15-function remote, and an edit mode to reduce picture loss during dubbing.

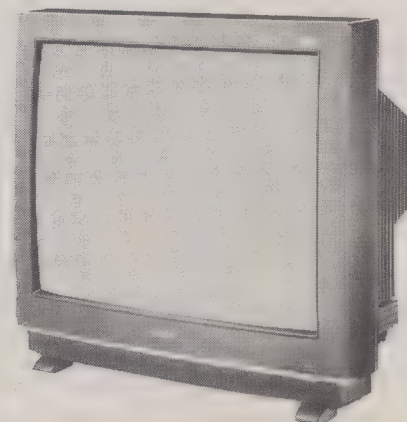
Prices: \$449.95.

For additional information,
circle no. 158 on Reader Service Card.



Toshiba Screen Uses Non-Interlaced Pic

Toshiba's CZ-2697 monitor/receiver has a digital double scanning non-interlaced system that doubles the broadcast signal displayed onscreen, producing a picture with twice the apparent vertical resolution. It also features a customized color control for accurately adjusting light, dark, and flesh tones at the push of a button. Other highlights include MTS reception, 181-channel cable-compatible tuning, multiple audio/video inputs and outputs, two RF inputs, a



CCD vertical comb filter, a digital comb filter, horizontal scan modulation, onscreen channel/time display, and a 34-key remote control.

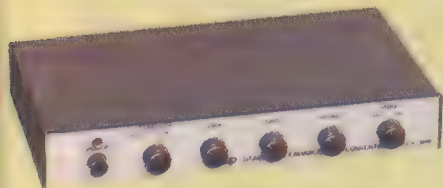
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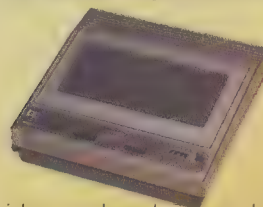
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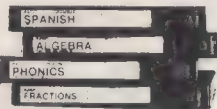
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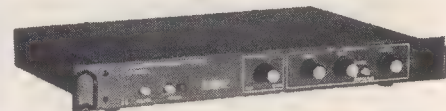
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New Products

Rhoades Updates Phoenix Surround Decoder

Rhoades has introduced an improved version of its Phoenix P250DL surround decoder. The unit features rear and front center decoding, individual and master level controls, a front channel



stereo synthesizer for mono programming, and an adjustable 5 to 50 millisecond rear channel delay. Rhoades has added extra inputs to the model as well as tape monitor loops.

Price: \$249.95.

For additional information,
circle no. 160 on Reader Service Card.

Sears VCR Sports Picture-in-Picture

Sears has introduced digital technology to its line of VCRs with its 5352 model's picture-in-picture, which lets you monitor a live TV broadcast while



watching a tape. The unit also features HQ circuitry, a three-head design, 119-channel cable-compatible tuning, 4-event/1-year onscreen programming, and a 32-function remote control. It plays and records in Dolby stereo and decodes MTS stereo as well.

Price: \$635.

For additional information,
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THE HOTTEST THING IN VIDEO IS OUR AUDIO

Like Video Magazine, we at 47th St. Photo know great audio when we hear it. And we also know a great product when we see it. That's why, when we saw their September issue, featuring the "Wireless Wonders," all about the new cordless infrared headphone systems, we checked out all the products and went right to the WIRE-FREE™ unit. Like Video, we think it's the best system, especially if you don't need stereo. And, let's face it, for sports, movies and even general programming, who needs stereo? With WIRE-FREE you can get high quality sound from any audio source (TV, VCR, Compact Disc, AM/FM radio, etc.) through any WALKMAN™ type headphones.

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Fine Tuning

Your Video Questions Answered

Parlez-Vous Video?

Q *I plan on dubbing some French movies into English by replacing the original dialogue. What equipment do I need to do this in stereo? Also, what type of machine do I need to duplicate a large volume of VHS videotapes?*

*B. Dijon
New Orleans, La.*

A You're taking on a large, complicated project which, if you want to do it correctly, is also going to be expensive. Dubbing foreign language films into English is quite difficult, since actors speak their lines with varying inflections, dialogue overlaps, etc. Even if you only want to replace an unbroken narrative with your own translation, it's still not something that can be done on the fly. It requires patience, expertise, and professional facilities.

As for duplicating "large volumes" of the finished product, assuming you get that far, it would probably be cheaper to send your master tape to a duplication facility.

Remote Futures

Q *I'd like to add some information in response to the letter from Steven Breslau ("Fine Tuning," October 1986), who had both of his RCA VCRs reacting to the same remote control signals. It's possible to add another amplification stage, or a buffer transistor to invert the signal, in one of his VCRs and its remote control (both must be converted). Then a programmable remote control, such as GE's Control Central, can be used to learn both*

the original and the inverted commands and operate both machines independently.

*Arby Schuman
Brooklyn, N.Y.*

A Thanks for the tip, Arby. But any of our readers who want to try this should wait until the warranty expires on their VCRs, and then consult a VCR technician to see what can be done and how much it will cost.

Hello Skinny

Q *Now that Sony has introduced high-end Beta VCRs (the SL-HF750 and SL-HF1000) that record in the BIs speed, why don't they introduce a new tape that records at least two hours at this speed?*

*Scott Johnson
Kings Mountain, N.C.*

A When the "speed wars" raged between Beta and VHS a few years back, Sony introduced the L-830 tape, which can record five hours of programming at the BIII speed, or 102-1/2 minutes at BIs. Sony might have wanted to cram more tape into a Beta shell, but the more tape you pack into a fixed space, the thinner it has to be. L-830 tapes are very thin—13 microns compared to the 20 or so used for L-500s and T-120s.

However, Sony's new P6-120 8mm tape is only 10 microns thick. It's possible, therefore, that the thin tape technology of the P6-120 could be used on a Beta cassette to yield a two hour tape.

Bear in mind, though, the cost of introducing any improved technology has to be

measured against potential sales. Sony may now feel that, even with the improvements of SuperBeta and Hi-Band SuperBeta, the current tape lengths are sufficient.

Power Struggle

Q *When there's a power failure and you're right in the middle of taping a movie, can there be damage to the tape because of the sudden stopping of the VCR? This happened to me once, and when I played back the tape, there was distortion in the picture at the place where the power went off.*

*Jerry L. Miller
Omaha, Neb.*

A There should be no damage to either the tape or VCR if the power should fail while the machine is running. With older VCRs, a sudden lack of power will simply stop the machine cold, and leave the tape locked around the video drum. But when the power comes back on, it will usually unthread (if VHS), and the record mode will be cancelled. Newer designs anticipate power losses, and have circuits that will automatically unload the tape to protect it from creases or wrinkles. Either way, when the power returns, you're going to have to re-cue the tape to continue dubbing, and you're likely to get a glitch at the place where you resume. Perfect edits are only possible with flying erase heads, a feature that's now available on many 8mm VCRs and at least one Beta, the Sony SL-HF1000.

If power failures are a common problem in your ar-

ea, you might want to investigate one of those "un-interruptable power supplies" that they sell to computer owners. They're expensive (more than your average VCR), but can provide back-up power for several minutes.

Ex-Static

Q *Is there a method of ending a recording without getting the mess of static that appears for a few seconds after you stop recording? I can make a nearly perfect edit at the beginning but get a messy ending all the time.*

*Richard Ingram
Corryton, Tenn.*

A The "mess of static" is unrecorded videotape. That's what you would see if you tried to play a brand new blank tape. Even if you're using an old tape, the VCR expects to record on it as if it had no older signals on it. To accomplish this, the VCR has an electromagnet, called the "full-erase head," located a few inches ahead of the point where the video heads record the new signal. That difference in position is what produces the static you see when you stop a recording.

Some VCRs with so-called "insert edit" or "video dub" capability turn off the full-erase head and boost the signal to the video heads, in an effort to get a clean beginning and ending point. But the most efficient way of accomplishing this is with "flying" erase heads that are mounted right on the video drum, right next to the ones that record the signal.

In 1981 VIDEO published a

Fine Tuning

"TV Den" column describing how to disengage the erase head and eliminate the glitch. Readers who would like a copy of the article can get one by writing to "Fine Tuning," c/o VIDEO, and enclosing a self-addressed stamped envelope.

Flutter Nutter

Q I have a problem with my Quasar VH-5846XE Hi-Fi VCR. When I play tapes recorded at the SLP speed there's a fluttering noise in the sound from the Hi-Fi tracks. It's not present in the linear audio tracks, and doesn't affect the SP or LP speeds.

The fluttering is audible whether I listen through the TV speakers, my stereo system, or headphones attached to the VCR, and the volume of the fluttering seems to coincide with the volume of the audio that has been recorded. What could be causing this?

Jeff Mangold
Largo, Fla.

A This low-level "buzzing" is a by-product of the fact that Hi-Fi tracks are not recorded continuously. Instead, 60 times every second there's an almost imperceptible loss-of-signal at the switchover point when the audio signal moves from one audio head to the other. Manufacturers are trying to eliminate it, but it's still present on far too many VCRs.

We've also begun to notice more Hi-Fi interchange problems than we observed two years ago when Hi-Fi VCRs first appeared. Interchangeability, of course, shouldn't be a problem with tapes played on the same machine that recorded them.

On the other hand, the slow SLP speed provides the poorest audio and video quality. At this speed, the amount of space available on the tape for each track is only 19.3 microns, even though the audio heads are 26 microns wide and the video heads are about 32 microns wide. This means that wider tracks are actually being recorded, but parts are erased by the pass of the heads recording the next track. This doesn't happen at LP or SP speeds, since in either case there's more room on the tape for both signals.

You can have your machine checked by a serviceman, but since you haven't noticed any problems at the two higher speeds, the fluttering noise at SLP is probably an inherent limitation of the format.

VIDEO welcomes your questions. Please do not enclose self-addressed envelopes as the volume of mail does not allow personal replies. Questions may be edited for clarity and space. Address letters to **Fine Tuning, VIDEO Magazine, 460 West 34th St., New York, N.Y. 10001.**

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Family

Arte Johnson's Kid Stuff, Embassy, 1986. Johnson shows how to make toys from string, milk cartons and paper plates. 19m. VHS, Beta (Hi-Fi). \$9.95.

How-To

Made Easy Series, Karl-Lorimar, 1986. Five instructional programs for the do-it-yourself home repairman: *Electrical Made Easy*, *Plumbing Made Easy*, *Paint and Paper Made Easy*, *Safe and Warm Made Easy* and *Ready to Remodel Made Easy*. With illustrated booklets. 25m. each. VHS, Beta. \$9.95 each.

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Comedy

Abroad with Two Yanks, Late Show, 1944, B&W. William Bendix, Helen Walker, Dennis O'Keefe. Two Marines compete for same girl. 80m. VHS, Beta. \$10-12.

Joe Palooka, Late Show, 1934, B&W. Jimmy Durante, Stu Erwin, William Cagney, Thelma Todd. Durante as brash boxing promoter. 86m. VHS, Beta. \$10-12.

That Uncertain Feeling, Roach, 1941, B&W. Merle Oberon, Melvyn Douglas, Burgess Meredith, Eve Arden. Eccentric pianist in love with married woman. 84m. VHS, Beta. \$14.95.



Drama

D.O.A., Roach, 1949, B&W. Edmond O'Brien, Neville Brand, Pamela Britton. Man dying from slow poison has time to track down killer. 98m. VHS, Beta. \$14.95.

Miss Annie Rooney, Late Show, 1942, B&W. Shirley Temple plays a working-class girl in love with a rich boy. 84m. VHS, Beta. \$10-12.

Quicksand, Roach, 1950, B&W. Mickey Rooney, Peter Lorre. A petty theft quickly escalates into bigger trouble. 79m. VHS, Beta. \$14.95.

Family

Aesop's Fables, Scholastic-Lorimar, 1986. Live action/anim. Bill Cosby plays Aesop

himself, narrating the story of *The Tortoise and the Hare*. 30m. VHS, Beta. \$14.95.

Blue Ribbon Storybook Vols. 1, 2, Scholastic-Lorimar, 1986. Animated stories with sing-along songs. Vol. 1: *The Little Red Hen* and *The Three Billy-Goats Gruff*. Vol. 2: *The Bremen-Town Musicians* and *Harold and the Purple Crayon*. 30m. each. VHS, Beta. \$14.95 each.

Chartbusters from Kids Incorporated, Roach, 1986. Versions of "Walking on Sunshine," "Freeway of Love," "Material Girl" by cast of youngsters. 30m. VHS, Beta. \$14.95.

Clifford's Singalong Adventure, Scholastic-Lorimar, 1986. Live action/animated. Clifford the Big Red Dog leads children in singing "Old MacDonald," "Skip to My Lou," and other favorites. 30m. VHS, Beta. \$14.95.

Colorforms Learn 'n' Play Vols. 1, 2, Scholastic-Lorimar, 1986. Stories encouraging viewer to use Colorforms to help characters through adventures. Includes playboard, 40 plastic play pieces, and reading tip sheet for parents. 30m. ea. VHS, Beta. \$14.95 ea.

Draw and Color a Cartoony Party with Uncle Fred, Playhouse, 1986. Instruction by comic-strip artist Fred Lasswell. 61m. VHS, Beta (Hi-Fi). Closed-captioned. \$14.98.

The Great Ape Activity Tape, Scholastic-Lorimar, 1985. Live action/animated. This program will show your child how to make paper bag puppets, toothpick towers and more. 30m. VHS, Beta. \$14.95.

Learning Can Be Fun, Playhouse, 1985. Alaina Reed of TV's *Sesame Street* is your child's host for a series of cheerful musical lessons on counting, the alphabet and the

Kidvid is Forever

Children's video—kidvid—is the 1980s version of the Saturday movie matinee. Anybody who remembers sitting in a cool, dark theater with friends, spending all afternoon watching cartoons, newsreels, a Flash Gordon serial, an Our Gang short and a Hopalong Cassidy double feature, knows that kids today are missing something. Saturday morning television today just doesn't have the same variety.

But video is different. The field of kidvid is brimming with worthwhile programs that children—in the same way they read a favorite book over and over—find eminently repeatable. Building your child a video library he or she can go to again and again is an important investment once you consider what's on regular TV. And fortunately, many kidvid tapes are quite inexpensive.

First of all, there are the perennial children's classics: *Black Beauty*. *Huckleberry Finn*. Rudyard Kipling. Hans Christian Andersen. They're available in many versions for all age groups, both live-action and animated, on many different video labels. They can pique your child's interest in the literature on which they're based—and maybe your interest as well!

Very young children are fascinated by bright colors and vivid shapes. To further motivate this natural process, you might buy them videocassettes starring such colorful characters as Gumby and Pokey (Family Home Entertainment), Clifford (Scholastic), and the Muppets (Playhouse). Mister Rogers (Playhouse) and Romper Room (Playhouse) are also adept at helping children learn these basics.

Energetic older kids who've learned the distinction between fantasy and reality may be ready for the physical comedy of Sylvester and Tweety or Coyote and Road Runner cartoons, not to mention Laurel and Hardy or Buster Keaton silent films. They also might be ready for the many "fun learning" programs that can give them a headstart on math, reading, and geography.

A kidvid library isn't just "children's features." Many movies, from the recent *Star Wars* to the 1939 classics *The Wizard of Oz* and *Gunga Din*, are worth watching again and again. It's the power—and responsibility—of parents to pick and choose wisely. Fortunately, the choice of inexpensive tapes kids can watch over and over is wide and growing wider all the time.

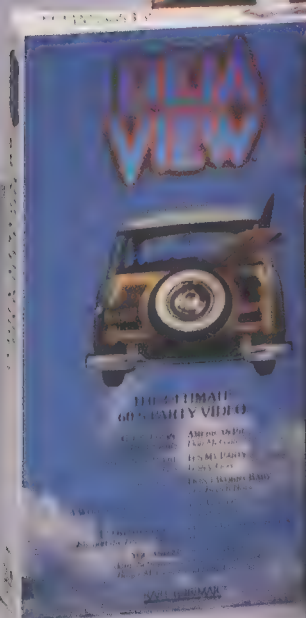
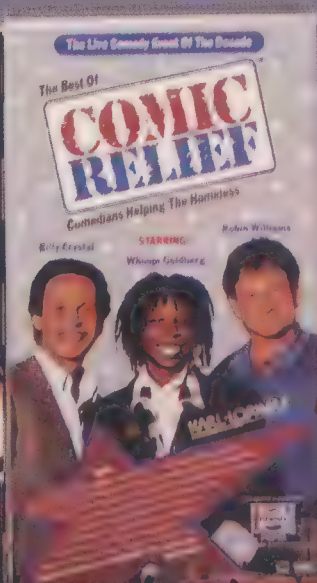
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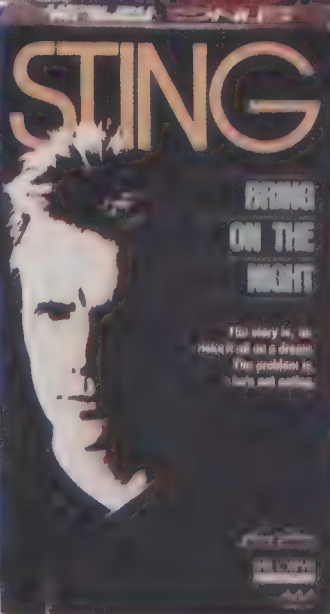
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importance of good hygiene, manners and neatness. 30m. VHS, Beta (Hi-Fi). Closed-captioned. \$14.98.

A Mirthworm Masquerade, Family Home Entertainment, 1986. Animated. Fable of costume ball competition. 30m. VHS, Beta. \$14.95.

My Friend Liberty, Karl-Lorimar, 1984. Animated. Liberty steps down from her perch to tell a skeptical kid her story. 30m. VHS, Beta. \$14.95.

The New Three Stooges, Embassy. The original Stooges introduce adventures featuring cartoon alter-egos. Four titles available: *Nutty Nature Lovers*, *Get That Job!*, *Funny Fairy Tales* and *Mild and Wild Animals*. 60m. each. VHS, Beta (Hi-Fi). \$14.95 each.

Pound Puppies, Family Home Entertainment, 1985. Animated. A canine-run organization helps stray dogs. 37m. VHS, Beta. \$14.95.

Rupert and the Frog Song, Family Home Entertainment, 1986. Three animated videos set to songs by Paul and Linda McCartney and Wings. 22m. VHS, Beta. \$14.95.

The Velveteen Rabbit, Family Home Entertainment, 1985. Christopher Plummer narrates tale of stuffed rabbit brought to life. 30m. VHS, Beta. \$14.95.

Horror and Sci-Fi

Revolt of the Zombies, Roach, 1936, B&W. Dorothy Stone, Dean Jagger. Undead soldiers balk at foul biddings of man who resurrected them. 65m. VHS, Beta. \$14.95.

White Zombie, Roach, 1932, B&W. Bela Lugosi, Madge Bellamy. Walking dead enlisted to labor in sugar mill. 62m. VHS, Beta. \$14.95.

How-To

Reach for Fitness, Karl-Lorimar, 1986. Richard Simmons leads exercises aimed at the handicapped. With lots of star cameos. 45m. VHS, Beta. \$14.95.

Music and Musicals

Pot O' Gold, Roach, 1940, B&W. James Stewart, Paulette Goddard. Girl gets Horace Heidt Band on father's radio quiz show. 87m. VHS, Beta. \$14.95.

Sports

The Golden Age of Wrestling Vols. 1, 2, Late Show, 1986, B&W. Two cassettes of highlights from TV matches, circa 1951-1961. 60m. each. VHS, Beta. \$10-12 each.

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Comedy

The Music Box/Helpmates, Roach, 1930s,



Colorized. Pair of vintage Laurel and Hardy shorts. 50m. VHS, Beta. \$19.95.

Drama

It's a Wonderful Life, Roach, 1946, Colorized. Frank Capra's masterwork, with James Stewart, Donna Reed, and Lionel Barrymore. 130m. VHS, Beta. \$19.95.

Family

Doctor Who: Revenge of the Cybermen, Playhouse, 1983. Tom Baker. Action-packed installment of the long-running British TV series. 92m. VHS, Beta (Hi-Fi). Closed-captioned. \$19.98.

Funfit, Karl-Lorimar, 1986. Perky Olympic gymnast Mary Lou Retton leads aerobic exercises for young children. 35m. VHS, Beta. \$19.95.

Mister Rogers' Neighborhood: Dinosaurs and Monsters, Playhouse, 1979. Fred Rogers hosts this leisurely-paced program designed to nourish young imaginations. 64m. VHS, Beta (Hi-Fi). Closed-captioned. \$19.98.

Mister Rogers' Neighborhood: Music and Feelings, Playhouse, 1986. Ella Jenkins and cellist Yo Yo Ma join host Fred Rogers. 65m. VHS, Beta (Hi-Fi). Closed-captioned. \$19.98.

The Raccoons' Buried Treasure, Embassy, 1986. Animated adventures *Dungeons and Dragons*, *Buried Treasure*, *The Runaways*. 72m. VHS, Beta (Hi-Fi stereo). \$19.95.

Space Sentinels in Mission: Outer Space, Embassy, 1977. Animated. Intergalactic guardians. 72m. VHS, Beta (Hi-Fi). \$19.95.

Tales of Magic, Video Book 2, Embassy, 1977. Animated. Includes *Hansel and Gretel*, *The Pied Piper of Hamelin* and *Don Quixote*. 90m. VHS, Beta (Hi-Fi). \$19.95.

How-To

American Health Vol. 1, Karl-Lorimar, 1986. Pointers to help you combat mental and physical stress. 60m. VHS, Beta. \$19.95.

Baby Dynamics Vols. 1, 2, Embassy, 1985.

Books on Video

Reading is, as they say, fundamental. Pictures on a screen will never be the same as words on a page, but a video adaptation, of anything from a cherished classic to summer trash, helps us relive a favorite book and encourages us to seek out more. For kids and teenagers especially, a library of books-on-video can inspire them to create their own library of books, period.

Defining "literature" is, of course, a big riddle. Most scholars and readers can agree on a large body of plays, stories, and novels that have stood the test of time, works by such authors as William Shakespeare, Herman Melville, and John Steinbeck, to name just a few. What makes such work "literature" is debatable, although one characteristic also determines which videos we buy rather than rent: Repeatability.

Maybe it's a favorite scene, like Tom Joad in *The Grapes of Wrath* telling his mother about how each of

us little people has to fight injustice in this world (Henry Fonda performed it movingly in the 1940 film). Maybe it's a few lines—Scarlett vowing never to be hungry again, or Rhett not giving a damn, in *Gone with the Wind*. Maybe it's irresistible characters like Huck Finn and Tom Sawyer, Iago and Othello, Stanley Kowalski and Stella and Blanche Dubois. Or maybe it's just the innocent pleasure of vicariously living out a romantic fantasy, *a la* the Harlequin novels put on video by Karl/Lorimar.

Fortunately, video is a goldmine of literary adaptations, from movies like *Moby Dick* and *1984*, TV versions on such labels as Monterey (PBS' "American Short Story" collection) and USA (PBS' "Hollywood Television Theatre" collection). Books-on-video are no substitute for reading, but a good video library can be a wonderful and stimulating adjunct.

Have it your way.

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Linda Westin, host. Exercises designed to develop infants' motor skills. Vol. 1 is for babies up to 18 months; Vol. 2, to 36 months. 36m. each. VHS, Beta (Hi-Fi). \$19.95 each.

Consumer Reports Videos, Karl-Lorimar, 1986. Two separate programs from the magazine's editors: *Home Safe Home*, *Cars—How to Buy a New or Used Car and Keep It Running Almost Forever*. 50m. each. VHS, Beta. \$19.95 each.

The International Workout, A.N.S., 1986. A light aerobic workout designed to eliminate risk of injury. 45m. VHS, Beta. \$19.95.

Learn to Ski, Karl-Lorimar, 1986. Instruction for beginner and re-entry level skiers. 60m. VHS, Beta. \$19.95.

Learning Bridge the Right Way Vols. 1, 2, Embassy, 1984. Lee Henry outlines basic strategies of bridge (Vol. 1), advanced bid and play techniques (Vol. 2). 60m. each. VHS, Beta (Hi-Fi). \$19.95 each.

Minnesota Fats: How To Play Pool, Karl-Lorimar, 1986. Fats and guest Waylon Jennings demonstrate proper stance, positioning, grip and more. 60m. VHS, Beta. \$19.95.

Parents Video Magazine, Karl-Lorimar, 1986. Three-cassette guide to raising toddlers: *Baby Comes Home*, *Meeting the World* and *Learning About the World*. VHS, Beta. \$19.95 each.

The Road to Achievement: Winning at Work, Karl-Lorimar, 1986. Robert Hover hosts this 6-chapter business primer; segments include "The Interview" and "Career Stress." 60m. VHS, Beta. \$19.95.

Wok on the Wild Side, Embassy, 1984. Chef Stephen Yan's guide to preparing a 7-course Chinese meal. 60m. VHS, Beta (Hi-Fi). \$19.95.

Music

Billy Joel—The Video Album, Vol. 1, CBS/Fox, 1986. Compilation of music videos, including "Piano Man," "A Matter of Trust," "Tell Her About It" and "Honesty." 40m. VHS, Beta (Hi-Fi stereo). \$19.98.

Billy Joel—The Video Album, Vol. 2, CBS/Fox, 1986. Includes videos "Baby Grand," "Still Rock and Roll," "Allentown" and "You May Be Right." 50m. VHS, Beta (Hi-Fi stereo). \$19.98.

Kid Creole and the Coconuts Live, Embassy, 1986. Ska/reggae group in concert at Le Zenith, Paris. Songs include "Table Manners" and "Male Curiosity." 60m. VHS, Beta (Hi-Fi stereo). \$19.95.

U.F.O. Live, Embassy, 1986. Includes "Meanstreets" and "Wreckless." 60m. VHS, Beta (Hi-Fi stereo). \$19.95.

Wendy "O" Williams Live, Embassy, 1986. Taped at Camden Palace, London, with



The International Workout

Wendy belting out "Bump 'n' Grind," "No Class," and more. 56m. VHS, Beta (Hi-Fi stereo). \$19.95.

Wham! in China—Foreign Skies, CBS/Fox, 1986. A look at the final appearance of Wham! in England, plus concert and backstage footage of their China tour. 60m. VHS, Beta (Hi-Fi stereo). \$19.98.

Sports

The Baseball Bunch, Scholastic-Lorimar, 1986. Johnny Bench and other Major League stars demonstrate drills and host a look at bloopers from pro games. Three separate tapes available: *Hitting*, *Fielding* and *Pitching*. 60m. each. VHS, Beta. \$19.95 each.

Something to Prove: The 1982 NBA Playoffs and World Championship Series, Sports, 1986. Dick Stockton narrates this collection of footage from the L.A. Lakers-Philadelphia 76ers matchup. 60m. VHS, Beta. \$19.95.

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Comedy

The Graduate, Embassy, 1968. Dustin Hoffman, Anne Bancroft. College grad seduced by an older woman falls for her daughter. 105m. (PG) VHS, Beta (Hi-Fi stereo). Closed-captioned. \$24.95.

Drama

Eddie and the Cruisers, Embassy, 1983. Michael Pare, Ellen Barkin, Tom Berenger. Reporter searches for vanished '60s rock star. Music by John Cafferty and the Beaver Brown Band. 110m. VHS, Beta. \$24.95.

The Emerald Forest, Embassy, 1985. Powers Boothe, Meg Foster, Charley Boorman; directed by John Boorman. American engineer finds long-lost son living with Amazon tribe. Based on a true story. 113m. VHS, Beta. \$24.95.

The Secret Lives of the British Prime Ministers, Roach, 1986. Dramatized profiles of seven great leaders, available in seven separate cassettes: *Gladstone*, *Wellington*, *Lloyd George*, *Disraeli*, *Pitt*, *MacDonald*, *Asquith*. 60m. ea. VHS, Beta. \$24.95 ea.

The World of How-To

How-to you do? Then do it with video.

Do-it-yourself projects and instructional videos are as natural a combination as hammer and nail. Books can go in depth as to why a particular drill bit or screw anchor should be used, but for showing you how to actually use them, nothing short of an expert giving you personal instruction beats video. And you can buy how-to videos and keep them on a shelf—preferably one you've built yourself.

People often think of "how-to" as being just carpentry, car repair, and such. In reality, however, it's much, much more. How-to videos are available to help you:

- ★ make your house safe for baby
- ★ prepare Japanese tempura, Boston baked beans, and Cajun blackened redfish
- ★ stop smoking
- ★ play better racquetball
- ★ find a new job
- ★ perform card tricks

- ★ choose the right wine
- ★ dress for success
- ★ learn new lovemaking techniques
- ★ speak Italian
- ★ play the stock market
- ★ buy a home
- ★ conquer your home computer
- ★ identify North American birds
- ★ hit home runs (with the help of Pete Rose), catch big fish (with Rick Clunn), improve your putting (with Jan Stephenson), or trim your thighs (with Jane Fonda).

There's something for everybody, no matter how specialized (would you believe tap dancing, playing video games and growing bonsai trees?). You can freeze-frame them, go back over specific points, watch a tricky maneuver in slow motion, and, basically, see how it's done. Video will have you catching trout, cooking them Parisian style, and serving them on a refinished antique dining-room table you bought with money you made from the stock market.

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2—THE INTERNATIONAL WORKOUT—Using her background as a healthcare professional in her native Sweden, Yvonne and her trainer, have developed this simple and efficient program of the very latest in aerobics, with injury prevention in mind. The complete workout includes the warm up, aerobics routine, floor exercises, cool down and relaxation.

3—THE FIRST STEP TO SUCCESS IN MODELING—Designed for the young woman who needs to learn about getting started in modeling or just have that professional "model" look. Get the inside information from the industry experts on choosing the best modeling agency and photographer, the audition process, runway modeling, special size modeling, make-up application and more.

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Tapes for Keeps!

D-Day Plus 40 Years, Embassy, 1984. Color/B&W. Tom Brokaw hosts this NBC News program commemorating the anniversary of Allied invasion into Normandy. 52m. VHS, Beta (Hi-Fi). \$24.95.

The Lion in Winter, Embassy, 1968. Katharine Hepburn won an Oscar for her portrayal of the crafty Eleanor of Aquitaine in this smashing historical drama. Also starring Peter O'Toole, Anthony Hopkins. 134m. (PG) VHS, Beta (Hi-Fi). \$24.95.

Family

The Amazing Spider-Man, Playhouse, 1977. Nicholas Hammond, Lisa Eilbacher. Live-action film featuring the Marvel Comics superhero. 93m. VHS, Beta (Hi-Fi). Closed-captioned. \$24.98.

The Best of Kids Incorporated, Roach, 1986. Top pop songs performed by children; selections include "Rhythm of the Night" and "It's Still Rock 'n' Roll to Me." 60m. VHS, Beta. \$24.95.

The Deadly Dust, Playhouse, 1978. Nicholas Hammond, Robert F. Simon. Spider-Man defuses an atomic bomb threat. 93m. VHS, Beta (Hi-Fi). Closed-captioned. \$24.98.

Horror and Sci-Fi

Blade Runner, Embassy, 1979. Harrison Ford, Rutger Hauer, Daryl Hannah. Twenty-first-century cop tracks down murderous cyborgs. 123m. (R) VHS, Beta (Hi-Fi stereo). \$24.95.

How-To

Richard Simmons and the Silver Foxes, Karl-Lorimar, 1986. Aerobic routines designed for senior citizens. With celebrity parents Jacqueline Stallone, Sal Pacino, Pauline Fawcett and others. VHS, Beta. \$24.95.

Music

Deja View, Karl-Lorimar, 1986. Ten new videos set to pop-rock recordings from the late '60s and early '70s, including "American Pie," "It's My Party" and "Don't Worry Baby." 50m. VHS, Beta (Hi-Fi stereo). \$24.95.

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Action-Adventure

The Adventures of Robin Hood, CBS/Fox, 1938. Errol Flynn and Olivia de Havilland star in the best swashbuckler ever filmed. 105m. VHS, Beta. \$29.98.

The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes, Playhouse, 1939, B&W. Basil Rathbone, Nigel Bruce, Ida Lupino, George Zucco. Holmes tangles with arch-rival Professor Moriarty. 86m. VHS, Beta (Hi-Fi). \$29.98.

Sherlock Holmes and the Secret Weapon, Roach, 1942, Colorized. Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's sleuth and sidekick Watson, as por-



The Emerald Forest

trayed by Basil Rathbone and Nigel Bruce. 68m. VHS, Beta. \$29.95.

The World's Most Spectacular Stuntman, USA, 1980. Dar Robinson, Cathy Lee Crosby. TV special with Robinson performing series of daredevil stunts. 60m. VHS, Beta. \$29.95.

Comedy

Arsenic and Old Lace, CBS/Fox, 1944, B&W. Who put the dead body in the window seat? Uproarious farce starring Cary Grant, Raymond Massey and Peter Lorre; directed by Frank Capra. 118m. VHS, Beta. \$29.98.

Smiles of a Summer Night, Embassy, 1955, B&W. Romantic complications among four couples spending weekend at country estate. Directed by Ingmar Bergman. Available in dubbed or subtitled version. 108m. VHS, Beta (Hi-Fi). \$29.95.

Some Like It Hot, CBS/Fox, 1958, B&W. Jack Lemmon, Tony Curtis, Marilyn Monroe.

Top farce of two musicians who pose as women to escape gangsters. 119m. VHS, Beta. \$29.98.

Documentary

In Search of...Vols. 1, 2, USA, 1976-81. Leonard Nimoy hosts episodes of syndicated TV series on mysterious phenomena, three shows on each cassette. Vol. 1: *Sherlock Holmes, Jack the Ripper, Tower of London Murders*. Vol. 2: *Eva Braun, Angel of Death, Nazi Plunder*. 75m. each. VHS, Beta. \$29.95 each.

War Chronicles Vols. 5, 6, USA, 1986. Patrick O'Neal hosts these entries. Vol. 5 covers *The Battle of Germany and The Air War...The Bomber Offensive*; Vol. 6, *Jungle Warfare: New Guinea to Burma and Island Hopping: The Road Back*. Vols. 1-4 and 7 also available. 60m. each. VHS, Beta. \$29.95 each.

Drama

The African Queen, CBS/Fox, 1951. Humphrey Bogart, Katharine Hepburn. A prim missionary and a seedy river captain journey upriver together in this marvelous character study directed by John Huston. 105m. VHS, Beta. \$29.98.

Casablanca, CBS/Fox, 1942, B&W. You must remember this: Bogart and Bergman in one of Hollywood's finest. 102m. VHS, Beta. \$29.98.

The Magician, Embassy, 1959, B&W. Max von Sydow stars in Ingmar Bergman's dark parable about a wandering illusionist. Available in dubbed or subtitled version. 101m. VHS, Beta (Hi-Fi). \$29.95.

Max Headroom, The Original Story, Karl-

Sleeping Beauties

Video resurrects "sleepers"—worthy films and TV shows that for some reason or another never got the attention they deserved. College towns and big metropolitan areas often screen them in art-house theaters, but for most of us, the only way we'll ever get to see some of the freshest and most imaginative films around is to turn to video. And often these films' relative rarity makes them worth buying and keeping.

Everybody's idea of a sleeper is different. For some, it's a big-budget movie like *Heaven's Gate* that didn't click with audiences here but found favor in Europe. For others, it's a small, independently made film that didn't have the benefit of a studio ad campaign or distribution. Many time, sleepers are early works by filmmak-

ers who've gone on to great success, and whose initial movies are being seen again in a new light.

How can you spot a sleeper? Ask yourself:

Did it last in theaters or on TV for less time than it takes for me to program my VCR?

Is it on any critic's top-ten list?

Was it made outside the Hollywood system and/or the Lucas/Spielberg empires?

Is it free of horny teenagers, ex-athletes turned "actors," bad rock songs, and merchandising tie-ins?

Is it good?

If the answer to at least four of these questions is "Yes!", chances are you've got yourself a sleeper. Hold on to it. Today's forgotten gem could be tomorrow's *Citizen Kane*.

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Tapes for Keeps!

Lorimar, 1985. Witty, visually dazzling tale produced for British TV about a computer-generated veejay. 60m. VHS, Beta (Hi-Fi stereo). \$29.95.

Rocky I, II and III, CBS/Fox. Sylvester Stallone stars as Rocky Balboa in the trilogy that made him a number-one boxoffice draw. \$29.98 each.

The Rules of the Game, Embassy, 1939, B&W. Director Jean Renoir's acclaimed social satire of French aristocrats gathered for weekend hunt. Subtitled. 110m. VHS, Beta (Hi-Fi). \$29.95.

Ugetsu, Embassy, 1953, B&W. Two peasants in feudal Japan leave their families to seek the spoils of war. Available in dubbed or subtitled version. 96m. VHS, Beta (Hi-Fi). \$29.95.

Family

Casey at the Bat, Playhouse, 1985. Elliott Gould, Carol Kane and Howard Cosell star in this episode from Shelley Duvall's cable TV series *Tall Tales and Legends*. 52m. VHS, Beta (Hi-Fi stereo). Closed-captioned. \$29.98.

Horror and Sci-Fi

Allen, CBS/Fox, 1979. Sigourney Weaver. Stunningly designed shocker of monster loose aboard spaceship. Don't watch alone! 117m. (R) VHS, Beta (Hi-Fi stereo). \$29.98.

Anatomy of Terror, Thriller, 1974. Paul Burke, Polly Bergen. Amnesiac veteran of the Korean War begins to remember his service days all too vividly. VHS, Beta. \$29.95.

Angel and the Badman, Roach, 1947, Colorized. John Wayne, Gail Russell, Harry Carey. Western gunman reformed by Quaker girl. 100m. VHS, Beta. \$29.95.

James Bond Specials, CBS/Fox. An array of recent Bond outings, all starring Roger Moore: *Live and Let Die*, *The Spy Who Loved Me*, *Moonraker* and *Octopussy*. VHS, Beta. \$29.98 each.

The Hound of the Baskervilles, Playhouse, 1939, B&W. Basil Rathbone, Nigel Bruce, Richard Greene, Lionel Atwill, John Carradine. Holmes and Watson take steps to protect an English lord from his family curse. 80m. VHS, Beta (Hi-Fi). \$29.98.

Pay or Die, Adventure, 1983. Johnny Wilson, Dick Adair. Kidnappers make the mistake of abducting the daughter of a martial arts master. 92m. (R) VHS, Beta. \$29.95.

Night of the Living Dead, Roach, 1968, Colorized. Director George Romero's infamous low-budget shocker. 96m. VHS, Beta. \$29.95.



Eddie and the Cruisers

Tales from the Darkside Vols. 3, 4, Thriller, 1984. Justine Bateman, Tippi Hedren, Vince Edwards, Vic Tayback, Carol Kane, Bud Cort, Peggy Cass, Farley Granger. Vol. 3: *Mookie & Pookie, It All Comes Out in the Wash, Levitation*. Vol. 4: *The New Man, Snip, Snip, Painkiller*. 70m. each. VHS, Beta. \$29.95 each.

How-To

Be a Winner, A.N.S., 1986. Professional advice for beauty pageant contestants from Bob Barker and others. 60m. VHS, Beta. \$29.95.

Change Your Job to Change Your Life, Karl-Lorimar, 1986. Executive placement consultant Walt Slaughter hosts program with segments on career path planning, interviewing tips, resumes and more. VHS, Beta. \$29.95.

The First Steps to Success in Modeling, A.N.S., 1986. Industry experts tell you how to choose an agency, prepare for auditions, apply make-up and more. 60m. VHS, Beta. \$29.95.

How to (Really) Start Your Own Business,

Karl-Lorimar, 1986. Counsel from the owners of David's Cookies, Pizza Hut and Celestial Seasonings, plus other professionals. 90m. VHS, Beta. \$29.95.

Mystery Magician, CBS/Fox, 1986. Anonymous illusionist illustrates the secrets behind seven classic tricks. 52m. VHS, Beta (Hi-Fi). Closed-captioned. \$29.98.

Protect Yourself with Simon Rhee, Sports, 1986. Martial arts expert Rhee demonstrates self-defense techniques for all ages. With L.A. Raiders Marcus Allen, Odis McKinney and Al Cowlings. 45m. VHS, Beta. \$29.95.

Music and Musicals

Bring On the Night, Karl-Lorimar, 1985. Feature documentary on formation of performer Sting's jazz band. 97m. VHS, Beta (Hi-Fi stereo). \$29.95.

Cabaret, CBS/Fox, 1972. Bob Fosse's ground-breaking musical, with Liza Minnelli and Joel Grey. 128m. (PG) VHS, Beta. \$29.98.

Color Me Barbra, CBS/Fox, 1966. Barbra

The Sound of Music-Video

Quick: What's the best-selling type of music video on the market? If you guessed Motown, top-40 or adult-contemporary, you're wrong. It's heavy metal—believe it or not. You won't find any single best-sellers among the many metal titles out there, but you will find that fans of that music are serious enough about music-video to buy videocassettes like LPs. And with record prices going up and up, they're using videos like records, too.

While you may only watch a concert video all the way through once or twice, if you're like most people you can hear your favorite records until your needle wears out. Videocassettes and discs can be listened to just like records. And with video, you don't even have to flip to the other side after 20 minutes.

What if you're not fond of rock and roll? Well, how about Frank Sinatra, Duke Ellington, Tom Jones, Willie Nelson, Bob Marley, Diana Ross, the Temptations, Neil Diamond, Judy Garland, Barbra Streisand, Chick Corea, Maria Callas, Etta James, Gregor Piatigorsky and Jascha Heifetz, to name but a few of the jazz, blues, classical, reggae, R&B, and pop performers on video. And this skimpy list doesn't even touch on the wealth of operas, operettas, symphonies and other epics on video—everything from Gilbert and Sullivan to *Tosca* and *La Boheme*. These are tapes you don't just rent—you keep them to listen to again and again.

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Streisand in her acclaimed CBS-TV special, featuring musical sequences built around a visit to the Philadelphia museum. With a newly-taped introduction by Streisand. 60m. VHS, Beta (Hi-Fi). \$29.98.

Hard to Handle — Bob Dylan with Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers, CBS/Fox, 1986. The only live Dylan concert available on video. 60m. VHS, Beta (Hi-Fi stereo). \$29.98.

My Fair Lady, CBS/Fox, 1964. Sumptuous mounting of the great Lerner-Lowe musical starring Rex Harrison and Audrey Hepburn. 170m. (G) VHS, Beta (Hi-Fi stereo). \$29.98.

My Name Is Barbra, CBS/Fox, 1965, B&W. Barbra Streisand in her first network TV special. Songs include "People," "My Man" and a *Funny Girl* medley. With a newly-taped introduction by Streisand. 60m. VHS, Beta (Hi-Fi). \$29.98.

The Rod Stewart Concert Video, Karl-Lorimar, 1986. Highlights from his 1984 concert tour, plus interviews and footage of early days with Faces. Songs include "Infatuation," "Maggie May," and "Tonight's the Night." 80m. VHS, Beta (Hi-Fi stereo). \$29.95.

The Sound of Music, CBS/Fox, 1965. Julie Andrews, Christopher Plummer. The most popular musical of all time, now at a reduced price. 174m. (G) VHS, Beta (Hi-Fi stereo). \$29.98.

Sports

How to Golf, Karl-Lorimar, 1986. Instruction with Jan Stephenson on driving, hazard play, putting and more. All segments are color-coded for easy reference. 50m. VHS, Beta. \$29.95.



\$39.98 AND UNDER

Action-Adventure

Bulldog Drummond, Embassy, 1929, B&W. Ronald Colman, Joan Bennett. Former British army officer looks for adventure. 85m. \$39.95.

The Fire in the Stone, Scholastic-Lorimar. Gang of children trace stolen opals. 97m. VHS, Beta. \$39.95.

The Four Feathers, Embassy, 1939. Ralph Richardson, John Clements, C. Aubrey Smith. Rouser about British Army officer considered a coward because he stays at home front and marries. 115m. VHS, Beta (Hi-Fi). \$39.95.

Riding High, USA, 1978. Eddie Kidd, Irene Handl. Motorcycle messenger challenges champ stunt rider. 92m. VHS, Beta. \$39.95.

The Saint: Vol. 2, Adventure, 1967. Roger Moore, Donald Sutherland, Jean Marsh in two episodes from the TV series. 100m. VHS, Beta. \$39.95.

Torpedo Attack, Adventure, 1972. Sidney Kazan, John Ferris. Greek submarine crew. 88m. VHS, Beta. \$39.95.

Comedy

Hobson's Choice, Embassy, 1953, B&W. Charles Laughton, John Mills. Dictatorial London bootmaker and his daughters, circa 1890s. Directed by David Lean. 107m. \$39.95.

The Kid from Brooklyn, Embassy, 1946. Danny Kaye, Virginia Mayo, Eve Arden. Mild-mannered milkman becomes middleweight boxing champ. 113m. VHS, Beta (Hi-Fi). \$39.95.

Lily Tomlin, Karl-Lorimar. Her Emmy Award-winning TV special, with guests Alan Alda and Richard Pryor. 60m. VHS, Beta. \$39.95.

Playboy Comedy Roast: Tommy Chong, Karl-Lorimar, 1986. Host David Steinberg, Slappy White, Richard Belzer, Dick Shawn. Taped live at Landmark Hotel, Las Vegas. 60m. VHS, Beta. \$39.95.

Red Skelton's Funny Faces, Part III, USA, 1982. Concert appearance by Skelton featuring mime and skits. 57m. VHS, Beta. \$39.95.

The Best of Comic Relief, Karl-Lorimar, 1986. From the benefit performance that featured Robin Williams, Whoopi Goldberg, Billy Crystal and others. 120m. VHS, Beta. \$39.95.

Why Rent When You Can Buy?

Wave buy-buy to your old way of thinking. Video is offering us more choices at a wider price range than ever before, and you don't necessarily have to just rent tapes any more. Prices have come down, selection has gone up, and as with any good idea that's come of age, we're telling ourselves, "I'll buy that."

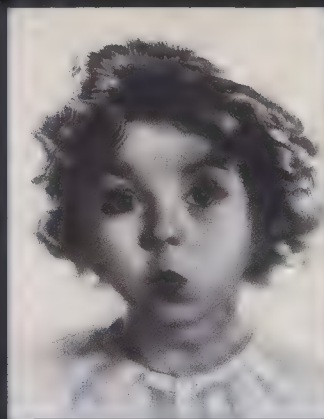
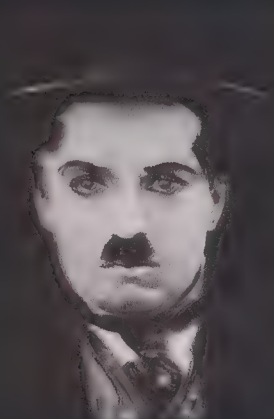
While plans are underway for a \$3.95, advertiser-supported "videozine" (a magazine-format video), you can, in the here-and-now, buy a slew of worthwhile cassettes at just \$9.95 apiece. There are children's videos, sports videos, music videos, and public-domain movies all at that price. Scoot up to between ten bucks and twenty-five, and you can find virtually anything on

video, short of major motion pictures. And even then, don't be too sure—the \$29.95 suggested retail prices of blockbusters like *Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom* are often discounted.

A surprising number of low-cost videos lend themselves to keeping rather than just renting overnight. How-to and documentary titles are the most obvious, but music videos, children's videos, movie classics, and sports videos are all made to be part of video libraries. Music videos, for instance, give you live performances and alternate versions of songs that may not be available on records. Children's videos are watched by kids over and over and over again—they're as perennial as

fairly tales. Movie classics are like great books—who wouldn't want to own *Casablanca* (\$29.95 from CBS/Fox)? Sports fans can take home *The Baseball Bunch* (Scholastic-Lorimar), Jan Stephenson's *How to Golf* (Karl-Lorimar), or *The Golden Age of Wrestling* (Late Show).

The \$79.95 titles may always be around to remind us that we don't have to buy everything we like, but lower prices are making videocassettes and discs an accessible form of home information and entertainment, like books and records. And with more and more low-price promotions such as CBS/Fox's 36-film "Five Star Collection" and Embassy's "Cheap Chills" horror-movie series, we've never had it so good.



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Playboy Video Magazine 10, Karl-Lorimar, 1986. Features an interview with 9-1/2 Weeks director Adrian Lyne, a music video of Roy Orbison's "Pretty Woman," photo session with playmate Cynthia Brimhall and more. 90m. VHS, Beta. \$39.95.

Playboy Video Magazine Vol. 9, Karl-Lorimar, 1986. Features an interview with Barbi Benton, a short film by Bob Giraldo and a portrait of the Playmate of the Year. 80m. VHS, Beta. \$39.95.

Drama

All Creatures Great and Small, Playhouse, 1986. Christopher Timothy, Carol Drinkwater, Robert Hardy, Peter Davison. Feature-length installment from BBC-TV series about a country veterinarian. 94m. VHS, Beta (Hi-Fi). Closed-captioned. \$39.98.

The American Short Story Collection, Monterey, 1977-80. Critically acclaimed Public TV series. Titles include *Bernice Bobs Her Hair* with Shelley Duvall, *The Jilting of Granny Weatherall* with Geraldine Fitzgerald, and *The Man that Corrupted Hadleyburg* with Robert Preston. 40-60m. each. VHS, Beta. \$24.95-\$39.95.

Darling, Embassy, 1965, B&W. Julie Christie, Laurence Harvey, Dirk Bogarde. Englishwoman leaves working-class hus-

band for series of high-society lovers. 122m. \$39.95.

The Home and the World, Embassy, 1984. An Indian woman encouraged by her husband to broaden her political views winds up falling in love with a revolutionary leader. Subtitled. 130m. VHS, Beta (Hi-Fi). \$39.95.

Time Lock, Monterey, 1957, B&W. Sean Connery, Robert Beatty. Boy trapped in a bank vault that won't reopen for three days. Written by Arthur Hailey. 73m. VHS, Beta. \$39.95.

Horror and Sci-Fi

The Flesh Eaters, Monterey, 1964, B&W. Shipwreck passengers stranded on island discover the local sea creatures have enormous appetites. 87m. VHS, Beta. \$39.95.

The Human Duplicators, Thriller, 1964. Richard Kiel, Hugh Beaumont, host Elvira. Alien sent to Earth to create race of androids. 82m. VHS, Beta. \$39.95.

How-To

Jane Fonda's Low Impact Aerobic Workout, Karl-Lorimar, 1986. Modified version of best-selling exercise tape. 50m. VHS, Beta (Hi-Fi stereo). \$39.95.

Music

The Grateful Dead Movie, Monterey, 1978. A must for Deadheads and other rock fans, this concert film includes "Truckin'," "Stella Blue," "Sugar Magnolia," and 16 other songs. 131m. (PG) VHS, Beta. \$39.95.

Sports

Playboy's Playmate Playoffs, Karl-Lorimar, 1986. See Playmate teams compete in the broad slide, the bucking horse, water volleyball and more. 75m. VHS, Beta. \$39.95.

Superclash 1985: Night of the Champions Round One/Round Two/Round Three, Sports, 1986. Three separate cassettes of wrestling highlights with host Sergeant Slaughter. 60m. each. VHS, Beta. \$39.95 each.

SOURCES

A.N.S. International Video, 196 Fifth Ave., 3rd Fl., New York, N.Y. 10018; 212-736-1007.

CBS/Fox Video (also **Key, Playhouse**), 1211 Ave. of the Americas, New York, N.Y. 10036; 212-819-3200.

Embassy Home Entertainment (also **Charter**), 1901 Ave. of the Stars, Los Angeles, Calif. 90067; 213-553-3600.

IVE (also **Adventure, Family Home Entertainment, Late Show, Monterey, Sports, Thriller, U.S.A.**), 21800 Burbank Blvd. 300, Box 4062, Woodland Hills, Calif. 91365-4062; 818-888-3040, 800-423-7455.

Karl-Lorimar Home Video (also **Scholastic-Lorimar**), 17942 Cowan Ave., Irvine, Calif. 92714; 714-474-0355.

Hal Roach Studio, 1600 N. Fairfax Ave., Hollywood, Calif. 90046; 213-850-0525.

A New Phrase: "Video Library"

The word "library" is wonderfully resonant; it speaks of accumulated knowledge, of the wisdom and art of the ages available readily to anyone. Every home should have a library of books. And in the electronic '80s, every home should also have a video library.

Its importance can't be overstated. A book may tell you all about World War II, but a videocassette or disc shows you. An art-house theater in your town may occasionally play pristine prints of Charlie Chaplin movies, but having those very movies in a video library gives your children a delightful alternative to Saturday morning television. Assembling your own video library is an investment, no doubt, but it doesn't have to be particularly expensive. And its rewards are incalculable.

While any home library is ultimately a reflection of personal taste, a foundation of classics and reference sources is important for both perspective and comprehensiveness.

Important reference works to have in your video library include first-aid and health tapes; documentaries on such topics as the Constitution, nature, our political leaders, outer space, the arts, and the cultures of different countries; and tapes on such social graces as choosing wines and speaking in public.

In the area of fiction, a good, solid video library might include certain classics and some representative cinematic milestones. For instance: *Casablanca*, *Psycho*, Charlie Chaplin's *The Gold Rush* and *Modern Times*, 2001: *A Space Odyssey*, *The Wizard of Oz*—you get the idea. Your video library could also include adaptations of literary works; the movies are filled with everything from children's versions of *Treasure Island* to decidedly adult versions of *Macbeth*. Don't neglect made-for-TV programming—some of the most collectible stuff going includes *Faerie Tale Theatre* (CBS/Fox), *Fawlty Towers* (CBS/Fox), *War Chron-*

icles (USA), and Barbra Streisand's two 1960s specials, *My Name is Barbra* and *Color Me Barbra* (CBS/Fox).

Go to any well-rounded public library, and in addition to books you'll also find records and sometimes films (and today, even a great many videotapes!). Likewise, your home video library (dare we say "videobrary"?) should include music tapes, sports videos, and video "pictorials" of famous cities and other such subjects.

Books and their unique qualities will always be with us, thank goodness. Video, which is getting cheaper to buy all the time, is now coming into its own. Some things are, after all, best experienced through sight and sound—a World Series championship, animals in the wild, a Robin Williams performance. A video library keeps all that at your fingertips.

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Also Starring HARVEY KEITEL RAY SHARKEY CAPTAIN LOU ALBANO

Music by IRA NEWBORN Written by GEORGE GALLO Executive Producer IRWIN RUSSO

Produced by AARON RUSSO Directed by BRIAN De PALMA

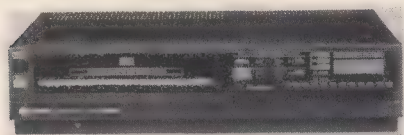


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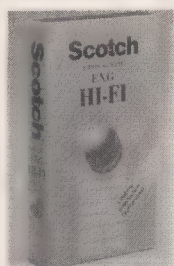
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Sima Features Mini Quartz Video Camlight™



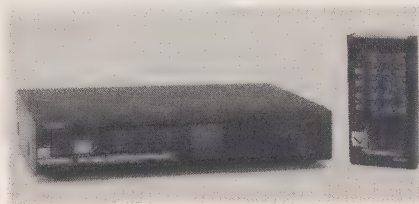
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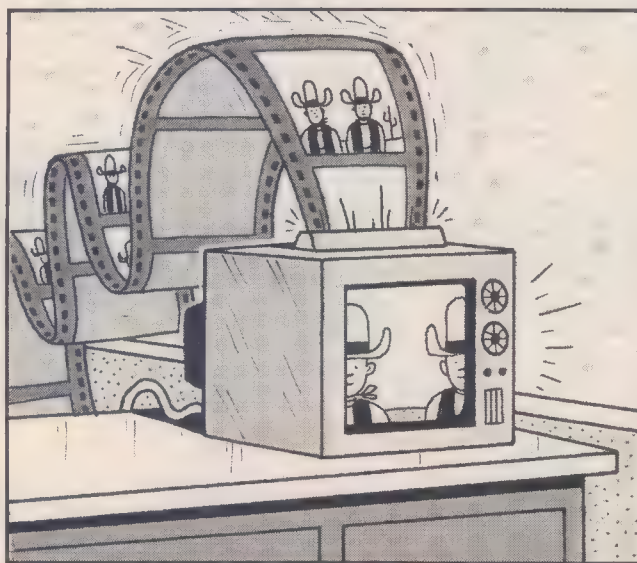
TV Den

Techniques and Technology

Wide-Screen Home Video

by Roderick Woodcock

CHRIS REED



Movie fans who yearn to own copies of their favorite feature films on videocassette or videodisc often have been frustrated by the visual constraints of the boxy three-to-four aspect ratio of the TV screen. The shape corresponds to the proportions of

spectacular visual allurements to recapture rapidly dwindling audiences. A few experiments, like 3D, were gimmicky and short-lived, while others—like Cinemascope, Vista Vision, Techniscope, Panavision, and other wide-screen processes—became standard movie formats.

Some used special anamorphic lenses to obtain a wide image that was optically shoehorned onto regular 35mm film, then expanded to its original shape during projection. Techniques like Techniscope and Vista Vision created an entirely new format that required specialized projection equipment in the theater.

Regardless of the technique, wide-screen movies are simply not compatible with our existing television system. As a result, transferring movies to tape is a complex process (and is often done sloppily and arbitrarily, with scant regard for artistic considerations). One of its most demanding aspects is called "panning and scanning." That's the job of deciding what parts of the original wide-screen image will be saved and what parts deleted when the movie is transferred to tape for home video or TV broadcast.

The job is not easy. Imagine sitting in a spacious movie theater to view a brand new release print of, say, *Return of the Jedi*, only to be told you have to watch the film wearing a set of blinders—the kind put on horses so they can't see cars and other distractions.

Wearing blinders, you'd have a tough time keeping up with the action on the

screen. In fact, you'd be moving your head back and forth in a horizontal arc to see everything. But that's what telecine transfer operators have to cope with. Knowing the only window a TV viewer can see the picture through is in a fixed three-to-four ratio, he's got to decide which parts of the entire frame to copy into that window, and which parts to crop out.

With opening title scenes, which often require the entire width of the movie screen, it's possible to electronically squeeze the letters horizontally to fit the narrower TV frame. Unfortunately, if the titles are superimposed over the opening scenes of the movie, the actors start looking like Boston Celtics.

For years, wide-screen movies shown on TV have been panned and scanned to make them fit into the boxy TV screen. It wasn't just a good idea, it was the law. The Federal Communications Commission, until recently, required TV stations to preserve the blanking width—the narrow black borders at the top and bottom of the screen.

With home video, that's no longer a problem, since cassettes and videodiscs are not intended for broadcasting. Recently, there's been a revival of interest in releasing wide-screen movies in their original theatrical aspect ratios, with black bars at the top and bottom of the screen. Only a few films have been released this way in this country; among them Woody Allen's *Manhattan* and the CED version of *Monty Python and the Holy Grail*.

the movie frame determined by Thomas Edison at the turn of the century.

Movie shapes have changed considerably since then while the TV frame has not. Some new video releases, especially on disc, squeeze wide-screen films onto conventional tubes by sacrificing image area at the top and the bottom. But, for the most part, videophiles will have to continue to live with the partial incompatibility of most theatrical films and TV monitors—and not all the reasons are technical in nature.

When television began to compete strongly with movies in the late '40s, cinema moguls turned to a number of

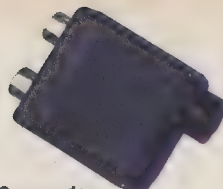


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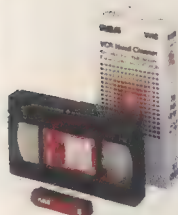
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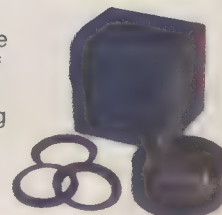


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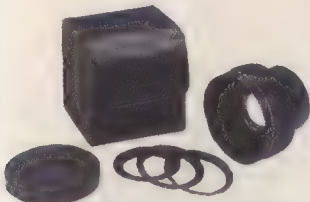
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Soft Camcorder Case (KK040) Provides protection for carrying fully assembled camcorder and other accessories.

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The Japanese have taken to this new release format with the most enthusiasm, though wide-screen releases are also frequent in Europe. In Japan, MGM/UA and Sony Video have been releasing many popular wide-screen titles uncompromised by the panning and scanning process. Titles include the 1956 classic *Forbidden Planet*, *Poltergeist*, *2001: A Space Odyssey* and its sequel *2010*, *Brainstorm*, *Clash of the Titans*, *Westworld*, and *El Cid*. More are on the way.

Why Japan and Europe and not the U.S.? Let's look at Japan: releases of English-language movies in Japanese have to be subtitled so Japanese viewers can understand what's going on. (It's also possible to dub a Japanese audio track onto a videodisc to accompany the original English track. But that sacrifices a movie's original stereo audio.) But subtitles superimposed over the original picture are annoying, and detract from the movie's visuals. By transferring these movies in their original wide aspect ratio, the theatrical appearance of the movie is preserved, a subtitling space is created that doesn't intrude on the image area, and stereo movies can be left

in stereo, since the subtitles take the place of a dubbed audio track.

I like the technique and hope it will be applied to more films, especially visually spectacular ones. It certainly simplifies the tedious process of panning and scanning the original film to make it fit a conventional TV screen. But more importantly, seeing the film as it was originally intended, even with the loss of picture size that results, is just more satisfying.

What we get now is more akin to tunnelvision—with the center of the action decided by anonymous telecine operators who are too often concerned more with technical than artistic considerations. How often, have you seen a tape of a movie where the dialogue appears to take place off screen, or where all you can see of two actors talking to each other is their noses? As a bonus, wide-screen releases sometimes show more of the film frame than you might have seen in the theater.

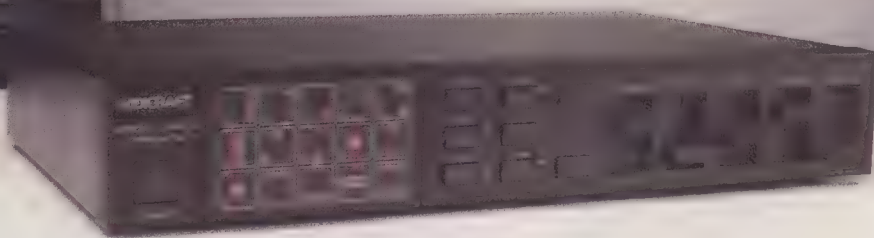
Special plates are often used for theatrical projection, to mask off a small area near the edge of the frame to prevent the audience from seeing the rough edges of the movie frame or the thin

black line that divides one frame from the next. Black masks or curtains on the screen also help to suppress these borders and give the image the neat, professional look you pay to see. Telecine operators transferring movies to tape also routinely mask the top and bottom parts of a scene, reducing even more the overall picture area that ends up on your home screen.

But in MGM/UA's Japanese release of *Forbidden Planet*, for example, you can actually see the splice marks made on the original negative when one scene was joined to another. Since the disc is pressed in the CAV mode, you can use the still frame/frame advance on the player to study the effect in detail. Other markings that appear include the circular cues in the top right corner of selected frames to signal the end of a reel to projectionists.

In the wide-screen release of *2001*, these marks, which are frequently eliminated from the scene in a panned and scanned version, cause little shafts of green light to momentarily burst across the scene. But these flaws are a small price to pay for being able to watch the movie as it was originally photographed. ▽

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The Third Format

A Report on 8mm Technology

Camcorder Harvest

by Roderick Woodcock

This month marks the third anniversary of the introduction of the 8mm format in the U.S.; in January, 1984, Kodak took the wraps off its first 8mm camcorders. People wondered then if Kodak had erred by endorsing the new format, announced only a year earlier, instead of sticking with an established format like VHS.

Three years later, Kodak's confidence in the big little cassette hasn't diminished. And now, it's no longer alone in promoting the format. Sony climbed aboard in 1985. Other 8mm entrants now include Canon, Kyocera, Aiwa, Sanyo, Pioneer, Olympus, Goldstar, and, most recently, Pentax, Nikon, and Minolta. A quick tour through the ranks should help illuminate their differences and similarities.

Indeed, the three new camcorders from Pentax, Minolta, and Kyocera are similar, even though Hitachi manufactured the Pentax and Minolta models, while Sony was Kyocera's source. Hitachi's own entry in the U.S. camcorder sweepstakes is the VM-5000, a full-size VHS model, with a top-notch MOS (metal oxide semiconductor) solid-state pickup. But Hitachi is ready to make other camcorder formats for sale under other brand names, which is just good business sense.

Minolta, one of its biggest customers, has a line of camcorders that includes 8mm, Compact VHS, and full VHS models. Pentax and Kyocera both added their 8mm machines to augment VHS camcorders.

Pentax's PV-C800A,

Minolta's CR-800SA, and Kyocera's KD-2010U are equally impressive. All three squeeze a complete roster of features into a relatively small, easy-to-hold package. Each measures about 5-1/2 inches high by 5 inches deep and 12 long, and weighs just a tad over 3 pounds without rechargeable nickel cadmium batteries.

Features in each include an 11.5 to 69 mm, 6:1, f/1.2 power zoom lens with macro focus, infrared auto focus that works even in low light, an automatic iris with a continuously adjustable manual mode, and continuous white balance. There's also a perpetual calendar for dating tapes that's optimistically accurate to the year 2098—when video technology as we now know it will probably be a thing of the past.

The solid-state 2/3-inch MOS image pickup contains 300,000 pixels, and has a minimum sensitivity of only 7 lux. It's the same as that found in the full-size VHS camcorders sold by Pentax, Minolta, RCA, and Hitachi, and is immune to the vertical "cascading" often seen with other solid-state imagers. When such units are pointed at a bright light, a white vertical light appears. This is caused by the bright light spilling over from one pixel to the one beneath it and cascading from one edge of the chip to the other.

Like the first generation of 8mm camcorders built by Sony, the new models feature a flying-erase head mounted on the video drum to ensure seamless edits without the color moire or staining that often occurs

with VCRs using conventional backspace editing.

While the emphasis is obviously on shooting features, all three can serve as off-air recorders as well, using their audio/video input/output jacks. A lightweight RF modulator is supplied, so that you can play back tapes on any regular TV, since you're not likely to find a monitor/receiver in a hotel room. Tape transport controls are clustered along the tops of the camcorders. They include still frame and five times normal picture search. Like Sony's 8mm camcorders, the new models record only at SP, but can play back LP tapes made on another 8mm VCR. Like most other 8mm entries so far, the Hi-Fi audio (monaural) is recorded along with the video, AFM-style.

All three also have a 2/3-inch electronic viewfinder (EVF) to let you preview your focus and composition as well as play back and check finished footage on the spot. But, as a concession to their small size, the viewfinder is integrated into the design of the body, and is not adjustable or detachable, although you can flip up the magnifying eyepiece to view the EVF screen directly.

An integral handgrip makes each unit easy to grasp but, like the 8mm Super 8 film cameras these camcorders are meant to replace, they're not designed to rest on your shoulder. Unfortunately, even at 3.5 lbs (with battery), the average videophile isn't going to have the stamina to hold one steady with an eye glued to the viewfinder for long. An accessory camera handle, which attaches to

the tripod socket on the bottom, takes some of the strain out of the sustained shooting, but a shoulder rest of some sort would be more practical.

Nikon's new 8mm camcorder, the VN-800, is similar to Olympus' 8mm VX801, and is manufactured by Matsushita. The Nikon weighs about the same at 3.3 lbs., and also has an f/1.2, 9 to 54mm, 6:1 power zoom lens. But it uses a 10 lux CCD (charge coupled device) pickup instead of an MOS chip. It too features a clean-editing flying erase head on the video drum, and a 2/3-inch fixed EVF with a flip-up magnifier.

In Japan, Aiwa has introduced a compact two-piece 8mm camcorder that consists of a 2-1/2 lb. recorder to which a half pound playback adaptor can be attached. It also uses a CCD pickup. Reportedly, Aiwa will offer this smaller machine here in the spring. Its current model, the Avimax CV-80, which is similar to Sony's Pro 8 and Kyocera's 8mm KD-200, is selling well. Chinon has also decided to augment its full-size VHS camcorders with an 8mm entry, also made by Matsushita, but has not yet said when it will be available.

Sony has introduced two new camcorders; a new top-of-the-line CCD-V110, called the Video 8 Pro, and the CCD-V3 dubbed the Auto Handycam. The CCD-V110 emphasizes features, rather than compactness. Like the Pro 8 before it, it is designed to rest on your right shoulder during use. But the finger-molded pistol grip can be adjusted to any of three operating positions and folds under the camera's body for compact storage. It has an f/1.4, 12 to 72mm, 6:1 variable speed power zoom lens, macro focus, and automatic focus with manual override.

It also has a 7-color character generator, an improved automatic white balancing system, and better detail emphasis circuitry to deliver even sharper images. Two features not yet found on any competing 8mm camcorder include an 8-frame (about 1/4 second) video animation mode and a 15 second interval meter. Both features combine with the glitch-free precision of the flying-erase head to deliver smooth animated or time lapse effects.

Even though the 8mm format doesn't use a conventional control track like VHS and Beta, Sony has designed an integrated circuit that can generate a real time readout in hours, minutes, and seconds, just as its Beta machines have.

You can play back tapes made on the CCD-V110 on any available monitor/receiver or TV using a supplied AV adapter. But, to optimize picture quality, this camcorder adds a picture sharpness control, a feature that's become standard on

high-end VCRs in recent years, but hasn't appeared on any camcorders until now.

For the moment, the advanced features and higher price (\$1995) of the CCD-V110 put it in a class by itself. But that doesn't mean that Sony is ignoring other markets. The Auto Handycam is Sony's answer to buyers who liked the small size and convenience of the original Handycam, but who also wanted sophisticated features.

This newest Handycam weighs 3.1 lbs., sans battery, has a detachable handgrip and the same 2/3-inch CCD pickup found in Sony's other 8mm camcorders. The 2/3-inch EVF lets you focus, compose, and monitor shots while shooting, and view the tape on playback. It also serves as a multi-function monitor of the VCR's operating status, and can display 10 alphanumeric readouts. Unlike

New mini-corders are already far more popular than 2-piece portables ever were.

many other comparably-sized 8mm camcorders, however, the Auto Handycam can't record from any external video sources.

On the Compact VHS side of mini-video, JVC ended several months of speculation by announcing its new GR-C9 record-only Mini VideoMovie. The GR-C9 is targeted at the same consumer that's attracted to the snapshot simplicity of the Handycam, but it offers the ability to play back the tapes it makes on any VHS VCR.

The GR-C9 at a smidgen over 2 lbs. with battery seems to be the lightweight champion of the moment. It's about 8 inches long by 5-1/2 high by 3-3/4 deep. Like the Handycam, it lacks a zoom lens and has only two focus settings. But, like the larger GR-C7, it records at SP and EP, with HQ circuitry to enhance the picture quality at both speeds. Regardless of format, camcorder sales have been steadily increasing. The new mini-corders, both 8mm and Compact, are already far more successful than the cumbersome two-piece portables. They succeeded at turning people who had never before thought camcorders practical into family videographers. Now, after three years, this generation of equipment is finally beginning to fulfill its considerable promise. 

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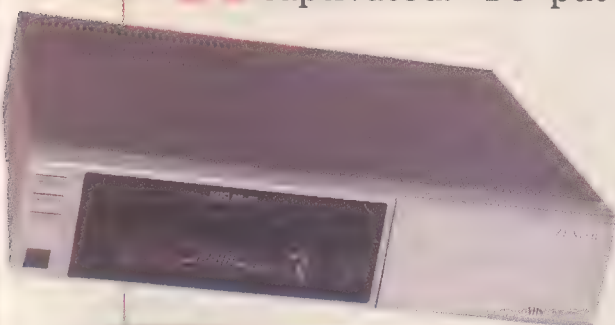
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THE YEAR'S BEST BETS

Nineteen eighty-six was one of home video's best years. Innovative new products and major and unusual releases kept video fans captivated. To put the non-stop bonanza

into perspective, we asked Technical Editor Lancelot Braithwaite, Senior Editor Ira Robbins, and Con-

tributing Editor Timothy Onosko to highlight the top trends, gear, tapes, and discs. If one of your favorites is missing, it's only because we found more than enough to go around.



THE
YEAR
IN

GEAR

Our Technical
Editor Reviews
1986's Best
VCRs, Screens
And
Camcorders

By Lancelot Braithwaite

In October of every year, just as the December issue is going to press, we look back at what we've reviewed over the last 12 issues in search of the perfect products in each category. That's not as easy as it sounds.

Video equipment should deliver the best possible picture, and audio equipment the best possible sound, but



there is more to a successful product than just those qualities. Their timely introduction, need fulfillment, ease of use, and utilization of today's technology all contribute to the pleasure and serviceability you should expect. We always select products to review with those qualities in mind. So, in a sense, what we have reviewed is already the most

exciting gear available. This, then, is an attempt to select the best of the best: the *creme de la creme*.

Over the last year progress was made on many fronts. A second company, Yamaha, started to produce consumer LaserVision players. Broadcast MTS (multichannel television sound) grew even faster than was expected, with some manufacturers building decoders into as many as half the models in their lines. The VHS format launched HQ (High Quality) VCRs with circuitry that sharpens edges, reduces noise, and enhances detail. Clouding the HQ introduction, manufacturers are allowed to use the HQ designation if they employ extended white clip level plus any of the other improve-



ments. Those who integrate all of the extra circuitry cry foul; those who don't generally keep mum about what's not included.

On the Beta front, Sony continues to add development after development. In addition to Hi-Fi (Sony was first) and SuperBeta (first and still unmatched for increase in detail), Sony has added to its top model Hi-Band SuperBeta over 300 lines of resolution at the resurrected Beta I recording speed, a titler, and built-in editing controller.

The number of 8mm brands continues to increase. Canon, Kyocera, Minolta, Olympus, Pentax, and NEC all introduced machines in the format. There's even a table model from Sony and a modular system from Kodak offering digital audio. Sony went a step further and built an 8mm recorder-player into a 25-inch monitor/receiver, a hybrid absent since Sony introduced the first consumer VCR, a combination model, in 1975. Most 8mm machines continue to be camcorder/players with both record and playback functions. The exception is Sony's Handycam, a 3.3-pound record-only unit you can squeeze into a coat pocket if you separate the camcorder from its handgrip.

Camcorders are not restricted to 8mm. Full-sized Beta and VHS models persist, and a revitalized VHS-C (now called Compact VHS) model is trying to conquer the market in a rather acrimonious battle. Beta camcorders remain record-only machines; however, detail-increasing SuperBeta circuitry has been added. There are currently three brands of Compact VHS camcorders, but two are almost identical. They do offer compactness and the basic functions with good picture quality, helped by HQ circuitry. With two record speeds, SP and SLP, you can squeeze one hour of recording into the tiny cassette.

Led by Sony, VCRs with built-in audio amplifiers are starting to emerge. This



Zenith VR-4100 VHS HQ VCR

new twist is seen as a way of getting better quality sound than conventional TV sound systems offer—without modifying or tying up your Hi-Fi system—for the cost of two speakers. In most cases, placement of speakers for good television sound is too close for optimum audio source reproduction. With a built-in amplifier, these VCRs allow a pair of speakers dedicated to TV watching to be properly placed without affecting your audio system. Sony went a step further and added selectable simulated surround using phase and delay information but requiring only the same front speakers. Akai followed with VHS models, one of which we reviewed. The amps have modest power but enough for room-filling sound.

A lot happened to viewscreens over the past year. First, glass picture tubes grew: 35-inch models are available from Sharp, Mitsubishi, and others; Mitsubishi also has a 40-inch. In Japan, Panasonic has 37- and 43-inch models, but plans to market them in the U.S. are unknown at this point. These large tubes are heavy: 35-inchers weigh about 110 pounds, 40-inchers over 200, exclusive of circuitry, cabinets, etc.

Competing in the same sizes are the first projection systems we really like—their pictures are as bright as tube-type sets. Rear projection systems from Pioneer are the brightest, while Sony's are the lightest (75 pounds), and NEC's the deepest. Front projection systems showed immense gains, too. Kloss now offers a 15-

foot model with Faroudja picture enhancement to reduce cross-luminance and cross-color problems (picture flaws created by incomplete or inaccurate separation of the color and contrast information in a TV signal) common in consumer equipment.

In TV sets 27 inches and smaller, MTS capability was not the only advance. The number with digital circuitry is increasing, and at least one manufacturer, Zenith, is using it for something other than the hokey picture-within-a-picture gimmick—teletext decoding. (Unfortunately, there is so little teletext information broadcast that it may see little use.) Meanwhile, digital TV circuitry still promises to make sets simpler to manufacture and service, with picture improvement a separate goal.

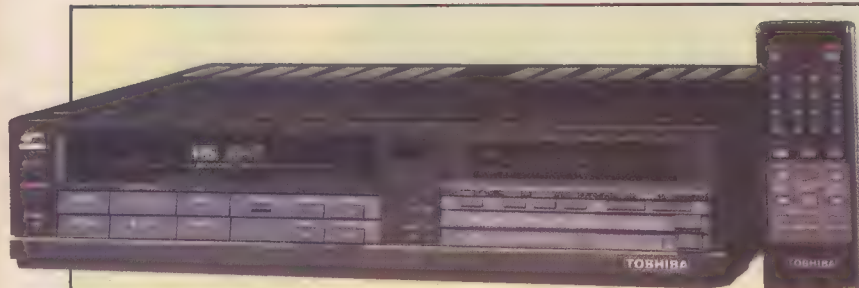
In the trend toward unified remote control for same-brand VCRs, Magnavox bettered the competition with a remote that will operate almost any VCR and wireless operable cable box.

Among accessories, the hot items were SEGs (special effects generators) for creating sophisticated videos, surround decoders, and MTS decoders. The few we reviewed go in too many directions to be lumped as a group. Still, tools that enhance creativity and expand the capability of last year's gear are increasingly finding their way out of studios and movie houses and into the hands of consumers.

There is one VCR advance that we've intentionally held for this last spot because

The year's best equipment (left to right): Zenith's SB2741X 27-inch monitor/receiver, Minolta's CR-3000S AF Compact VHS camcorder, Kloss' Novabeam 100 front projection system, and Magnavox's GR7290BH 27-inch monitor/receiver.





Toshiba's M-5900 VHS HQ VCR, and Sony's Access 401 audio/video system with 36-inch projection screen.



we smell confusion brewing. Some manufacturers are marketing machines that they call "Digital VCRs," while more cautious ones are correctly describing them as "VCRs with digital effects." These are analog VCRs with some digital memory for special effects. They record analog signals in analog form—that's not digital recording. The first professional video recorders to record digital signals were shown in March, and it will be a few years before consumer VCRs can record digital signals. When that time comes, there will be much confusion between VCRs that record digital signals and those that use digital memory for special effects. If we start using the correct name now you won't have to unlearn the misapplied term later.

VHS VCRs

We reviewed one in each of the following categories: basic no-frills, mid-priced mono HQ, and mid-priced mono HQ with digital special effects. The no-frills model offers nothing but an attractive price. The mid-priced RCA VMT390 has excellent picture but mono, linear track sound. If you're on a tight budget it's a good deal. Otherwise, go for a Hi-Fi machine with a built-in MTS decoder.

The RCA VMT400, with digital special effects, is the first of many such VCRs from assorted manufacturers. If you want an outstanding picture with absolutely great effects, and don't give a fig about stereo Hi-Fi sound, we recommend it highly. Otherwise, wait for one with equal performance in the sound department. We also reviewed two Hi-Fi machines without HQ; they have a lot to offer, but we recommend you pass them up for HQ machines.

The cream of this year's VHS machines were those with HQ circuitry, Hi-Fi sound, and MTS decoders. We reviewed six machines in this class, plus the Akai VS-565U with a built-in amplifier. The best picture came from Toshiba's M-5900, followed by the Akai. However, Zenith's VR-4100 had the highest flexibility, and Panasonic's PV-1742 was the easiest to understand. The others in the group—from Yamaha and JVC—have equal performance to the Zenith but with a few less features.

Our top choices are the Toshiba, the

Akai, and the Zenith. If your video isn't hooked up to your Hi-Fi system you may want the Akai; if your VCR is hooked to your Hi-Fi system, or you aren't fussy about sound, then it's a tough choice between the Toshiba and the Zenith. The Toshiba has a slightly superior picture, but the Zenith has more and better features.

We did review one videocassette player, Supra's SV-70. The savings from the missing record function don't make it worthwhile. Buy a VCR, instead. If you make your own videos, or want a VCR for your recreation vehicle, a full-sized camcorder may be just the thing. You may even use it as the playback for mono dubbing of tapes recorded at SP.

You have a choice between two basic types, those made by Matsushita (like the Panasonic PV-300) and those made by Hitachi (like the RCA CMR300, or Hitachi's VM-3000A). They are very closely matched in light sensitivity and picture quality, though the Matsushita type uses a CCD sensor and the Hitachi a MOS sensor.

All of the models we reviewed this year have at least some HQ circuitry. The Panasonic offers auto fade; the Hitachi and RCA models don't. On the other hand, they boast continuous auto white balance, which adjusts for changing lighting conditions even during a shot. Differences between the Hitachi and the RCA are minute—the RCA opts for rotary manual white balance and iris controls instead of the linear slider used on the Hitachi. Rotary controls allow slightly more accurate adjustment, so we choose the RCA CMR300 as the best. However, we wouldn't disagree strongly with those who chose the Panasonic or the Hitachi camcorders. They're that close.

COMPACT VHS CAMCORDERS

We reviewed three Compact VHS camcorder/players, two of which—JVC's GR-C7 and Zenith's VM-6200—are almost identical. The red-and-black JVC has a hard carrying case included in the price, while Zenith (gray and black) makes it an option. The third we reviewed—by Minolta—is based on the same transport but is styled differently. Instead of a hand-supported cube, it's a shoulder-supported oblong and much more comfortable to use. A bit less compact, its picture is slightly better, with optics by Minolta. A built-in character generator can superimpose up to three lines, and a two-lens viewfinder system delivers a larger, brighter picture than the competing models. We prefer Minolta's CR3000S AF for its picture, features, and comfort.

SUPERBETA HI-FI VCRs

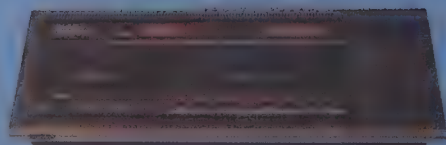
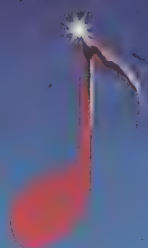
The three SuperBeta Hi-Fi models we reviewed cater to a different market, and are not truly comparable. The deluxe Sony SL-HF1000 is a no-compromise videophile machine with Hi-Band SuperBeta at the BI speed for excellent 300-line picture quality. It has every bell and whistle, including a complete 8-edit programmable controller with 2-frame accuracy, an 8-page titler with four character sizes, and a jog/shuttle dial for accurate tape movement at multiple speeds. It is the most advanced editing deck ever to be labeled a consumer VCR. This is one of the best we reviewed in 1986.

Sony's SL-HFT7, with an amplifier, is not intended to compete with the HF1000 and has none of its editing features, but is

continued on page 112

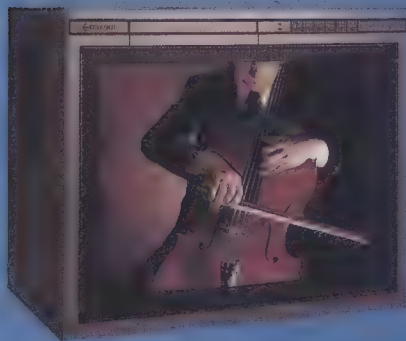
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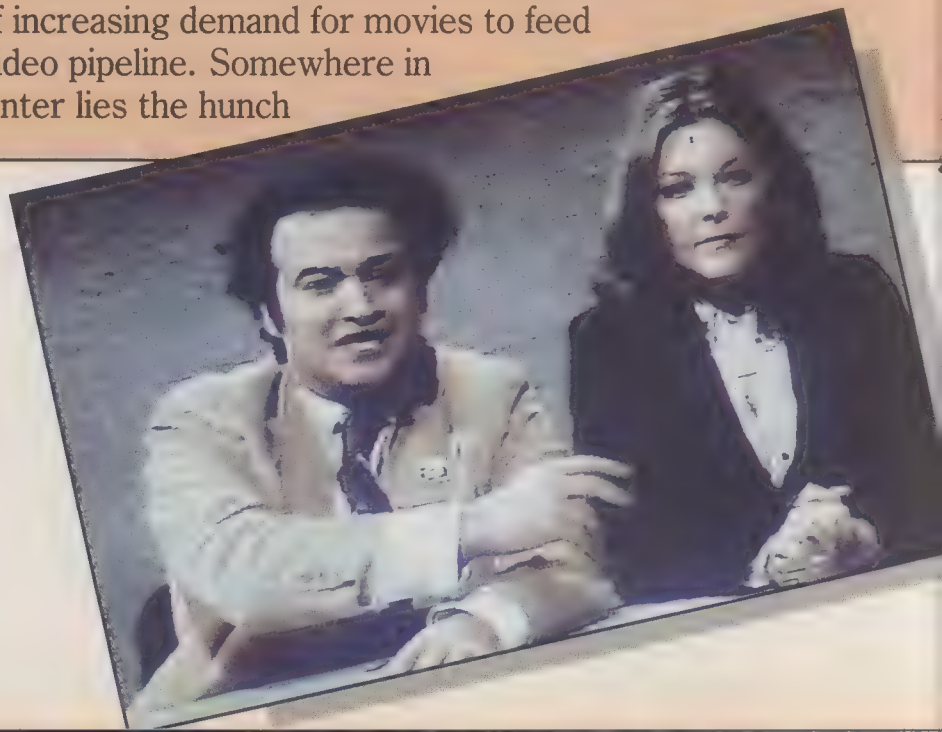
By Ira Robbins

Somewhere near the bottom of that familiar list of life's certainties headed by death, taxes, and televised awards shows which run overtime, one hardy perennial is the what's-wrong-with-movies-today article. You know the story: righteously indignant film critic excoriates Hollywood for turning out pandering,



big-budget stupidity and the filmgoing public for supporting lowbrow exploitation junk rather than challenging, rewarding works of substantial and lasting artistic merit. Interestingly, amidst the obligatory (and utterly valid) themes of cupidity, paganism, and crass juvenility, recent excursions onto this well-trod turf have begun to address home video's impact on the overall direction of filmmaking.

Opinion, to put it mildly, is divided. Like the proverbial half-filled water glass, video is seen as both cause and potential balm for what's ailing cinema today. Some blame the ready cash provided by home video for a population explosion in B-movie staple genres—gore, kung-fu, T&A teenlust, women behind bars—thereby crowding out and discouraging quality projects. Others, who see adults fleeing the hypertensive world of today's neighborhood cineplex for tamer, more refined video experiences at home, recognize the salutary effect of increasing demand for movies to feed that video pipeline. Somewhere in the center lies the hunch



that providing the maximum opportunity for viewers to customize their viewing is a development that can only bode well for pop culture.

We here at VIDEO do our level best to keep up with what's coming out and what's going on in the wonderful world of pre-recorded video. Over the past year's worth of issues, we've reviewed nearly 500 tapes and listed over 3,000 in the Directory. But even *that* doesn't account for everything that came out in 1986! In addition to countless made-for-video programs—instructional tapes, work-outs, music, sports, cartoons, etc.—video labels released movies from every era and area of cinema, including silents, plus a slew of television shows, mini-series, documentaries, and movies-of-the-week. Trust us: if you spent eight hours a day doing nothing but watching new video releases, you couldn't keep up with the onslaught. In the interests of saving everyone valuable time, what we've tried to do in this annual wrap-up is to recapitulate the high points of a banner year in video software, pointing out tapes you may have missed, and perhaps reminding you of some you enjoyed.

TEN AND SHRINKING

Although now a decade old, home video is still feeling its uncertain way in the marketplace. Pricing remains highly volatile, especially now that most of the major labels are starting to push selected titles as purchase items more than rentals. The belated insight that pricing might actually bear some relationship to consumer decision-making has led to a wave of \$15-\$30 tapes, both old and new releases. There's still a way to go before videocassettes can really be thought of as affordable, but this year's Christmas promotions provided lots of encouragement.

This year also saw the film-to-video



'The Wild One' was the year's best classic drama.

"window" shrinking. Much of what illuminated silver screens over the past 12 months has already reached video stores. The notion of milking movies for every possible ticket and cable sale before finally releasing cassettes and discs is all but forgotten. Consider this: of the 20 top-grossing films listed by *Variety* in mid-June, a dozen are now out on tape. Turn the pages back to March, and only three of 20 are not in the stores. Yet.

A trio of technical innovations had a sharp impact on prerecorded video in 1986. The proportion of tapes with Dolby surround sound for stereo buffs grew, but so did the use of Macrovision copy-protection. Several major studios embraced the system, which did manage to preclude tape dubbing, yet also produced aggravating visual problems for some innocent viewers attempting ordinary playback. Finally, computer colorization took hold, appalling film purists but delighting those for whom black & white movies are inherently inferior to those with color. Any color. Among the classics given chromatic overhauls in 1986 were *It's a Wonderful Life* from Roach (angrily denounced by star James Stewart and director Frank Capra), Jimmy

Cagney's *Yankee Doodle Dandy* (CBS/Fox), and George Romero's *Night of the Living Dead* (Roach). (Be forewarned: *Casablanca* is coming...)

Meanwhile, the format wars continued to rage, with energetic up-and-comer 8mm gaining on Beta's flagging form. The first prerecorded 8mm videocassettes were released, and several major licensing deals announced, significantly increasing the number of titles available in the junior-size format.

THE BIG GUNS

Of course, 1986 will ultimately be known mostly for the blockbuster movies that were released on video:

Back to the Future (MCA), the ultra-successful time travel comedy, in Steven Levy's words, is "that rare instance where a halfway original idea is executed with verve, humor, and an infallible sense of what the word 'crowd-pleasing' means in the '80s." Additionally, watching it on cassette allows you to catch more of the witty then-and-now subtleties you may have missed. *Cocoon* (CBS/Fox), another smash science fiction invention with a heart of gold, didn't translate as well to video. Richard Gehr found director Ron Howard's "cute, slightly ribald view of death and aging less heartwarming than precious and forced." But joy can still reign *chez Howard*: *Gung Ho* (Paramount), an intelligent, perceptive tale about Japanese industrialists and American workers, wins the 1986 VIDEO Magazine Award (VMA) for Best Film (Comedy).

On the other hand, *Down and Out in Beverly Hills* (Touchstone), Paul Mazursky's satire about a conniving hobo who seduces a nouveau riche family, is neither as funny nor pointed as its socio-economic situation promises, and ends on a disappointingly upbeat note. But it does have good performances by Nick Nolte, Bette



Highlights of '86 (left to right):
'Streetwise,' 'The Best of John Belushi,'
'Salvador,' and 'The Girl Can't Help It.'



Midler, and Richard Dreyfuss, and a few funny bits. Another class-struggle comedy, *Pretty in Pink* (Paramount), starring Molly Ringwald, may have spawned a chart-topping soundtrack album, but "the film doesn't work. [It] skips the details and passion," and "never develops any momentum or energy."

Witness (Paramount), while unequivocally proving the dramatic talents of both Harrison Ford and Kelly McGillis, provided one of the year's rare video experiences—a film so rich and attractive that it easily bears repeated viewing. Mark Fleischmann compared director Peter Weir's "control and visual poetry" to Hitchcock, and described *Witness* as "jarring and wonderful."

Out of Africa (MCA), the Best Picture Oscar winner with Meryl Streep and Robert Redford, was the year's leading high-brow semi-literary romance. While praising co-star Klaus Maria Brandauer, the photography, and the music, Tom Soter called the film "a dopey soap opera, with two posturing stars playing lovers." On the other hand, John Walker characterized *Murphy's Romance* (RCA/Columbia), Martin Ritt's warm and unassuming love story with Sally Field and James Garner, as "an appealing look at the cautious evolution of a relationship...good-natured without being cloying."

A far steamier relationship formed the basis of *9 1/2 Weeks* (MGM/UA), the video release of which was greatly anticipated, in light of the disappointingly timid film version. Although Mickey Rourke and Kim Basinger's intense S&M affair was extended by one innocuous scene, Louis Kesten slagged off the picture as "high-gloss soft-porn for yuppies too self-conscious to rent *Deep Throat*."

AMERICA FIRST

Jingoism and military-might-as-national-honor remains a major, and relentlessly



'Elvis Costello and the Attractions'

popular film subject, and rampant Reaganism routinely turned up on tape in 1986. Fearless of St. Sly, Timothy Onosko pilloried *Rambo: First Blood Part II* (Thorn): "a hoot, a camp classic...an unintentionally funny burlesque of war films mounted on a scale so grand as to be outlandish." Stallone's other neverending story grunted up *Rocky IV* (CBS/Fox), another nationalist bellow in which the boxers represent superpowers and fight for the future of the entire free world.

Chuck Norris saved American face overseas in the thinly-veiled headline-based hijack rescue, *Delta Force* (Media). Chuck Norris saved American face overseas (again) in *Missing in Action 2: The Beginning* (MGM/UA). Lou Gossett Jr. helped save Americans overseas in *Iron Eagle* (CBS/Fox). (Amazingly, his fighter jet didn't run into Chuck's over Libya. Or was that supposed to be Lebanon?) Meanwhile, Gregory Hines, Mikhail Baryshnikov, and Isabella Rossellini danced up a storm for Uncle Sam in *White Nights* (RCA/Columbia).

Sequels provided some of 1986's biggest video bonanzas, if not some of its finer artistic achievements. Michael Douglas and Kathleen Turner went on a second

comic book adventure in *The Jewel of the Nile* (CBS/Fox), while Harrison Ford dragged Kate Capshaw through a similar jungle trek in *Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom* (Paramount). In a somewhat different vein, and not really a sequel, *Return to Oz* (Disney) is, in Mark Fleischmann's words, "a work of unbridled perversity...mindlessly flashy, too timid to fulfill the doom to which it points, yet gratuitously cynical."

Except for the timidity, much the same can be said of *A Nightmare on Elm Street 2: Freddy's Revenge* (Media), one of the most popular grotesqueries in a bumper crop of blood, mayhem, and teeth-clenching suspense that also included the funny and flagrant *Re-Animator* (Vestron), the unrated version of which wins our 1986 VMA for Best Film (Horror/Science Fiction).

OFF THE BEATEN PATH

Of all the professional nightmares a director can encounter, having a completed picture shelved must be up there with watching a brand-new house slide off a cliff. When Terry Gilliam delivered his visionary satire, *Brazil*, to the studio that was supposed to distribute it, the local moguls decided—for misguided commercial reasons—not to. Gilliam and Robert DeNiro, one of its stars, launched a desperate, ultimately successful, release-our-movie campaign. After all that, *Brazil* (MCA) received laudatory reviews and even made it to video.

While few films encounter roadblocks of that magnitude, even projects with full studio enthusiasm can get lost. Sometimes, despite money, promotional effort, rave critical notices, and positive word-of-mouth, a fine movie can open too slowly and disappear before reaching its target

continued on page 114

1986 VIDEO MAGAZINE AWARD WINNERS

Best Film (Comedy).....	Gung Ho (Paramount)
Best Film (Drama).....	Salvador (Vestron)
Best Film (Horror/Science Fiction).....	Re-Animator (Vestron)
Best Classic (pre-1970) Film (Comedy).....	The Girl Can't Help It (Key)
Best Classic Film (Drama).....	The Wild One (RCA/Columbia)
Best Film (Documentary).....	Streetwise (New World)
Best Music Program.....	The Best of Elvis Costello and the Attractions (CBS/Fox)
Best Made for Television Program.....	Max Headroom: The Original Story (Karl-Lorimar)
Best Comedy Program.....	The Best of John Belushi (Warner)
Best Sports Program.....	Pinstripe Power (Scotch)

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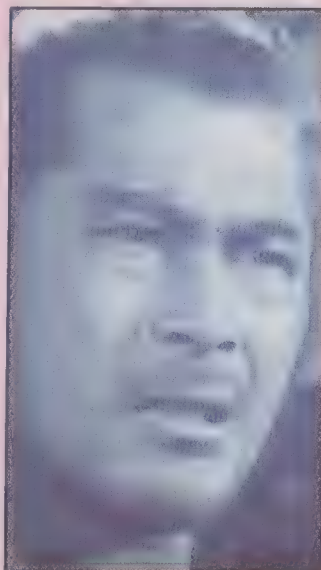
THE YEAR IN

1986

**'Back To The
Future,' Orson
Welles And
Innovative Uses
Animate
Video's
Minority Format**

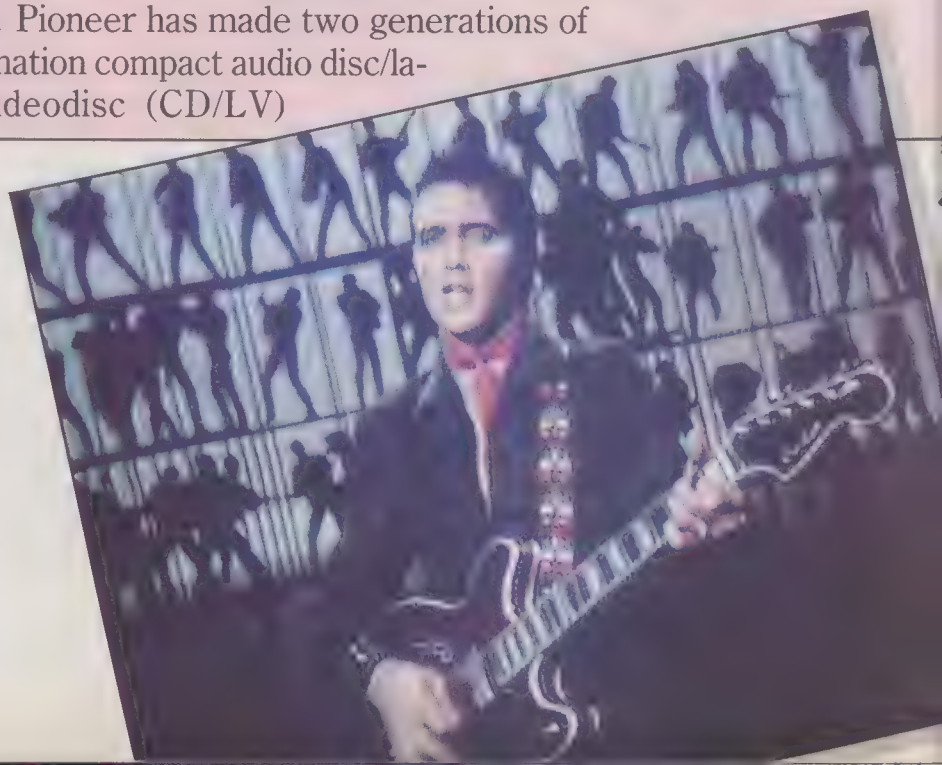
By Timothy Onosko

The optical videodisc celebrated its eighth birthday in 1986, yet a typical response from those who encounter it for the first time runs something like, "I thought RCA stopped making those things years ago." Although RCA ended production of its own videodisc—the needle and groove system—the laser



videodisc continues as the only consumer alternative to videocassettes. Nonetheless, this slowest revolution—the promise of high quality sound and picture, not to mention still-frame and random-access capabilities unmatched by any videotape format—rolls on. New and better hardware and programming for the LaserVision videodisc continues to appear, but with comparatively little fanfare.

The most significant videodisc news in 1986 was not about the disc itself, but the overwhelming popularity of its little sibling, digital audio's compact disc. The widespread acceptance of CDs is beginning to nudge the videodisc to broader recognition as new videophiles start to understand that what the CD is to audio, the laser videodisc means to video. In fact, Pioneer Corporation, which has carried the ball for LaserVision and is its sole cheerleader in the U.S., has come up with a way to strengthen the connection between the two media. Pioneer has made two generations of combination compact audio disc/laser videodisc (CD/LV)



players, and offers an additional, fully digital stereo soundtrack on many discs for those players capable of decoding it. The firm has also introduced a new kind of videodisc.

Late in 1986, Pioneer debuted something it is misleadingly calling the Compact LaserDisc (CLD). While the idea behind it—combining LaserDisc and CD programming, video and audio—is relatively simple the CLD is by no means compact. In fact, it is a standard, single-sided (CLV format) 12-inch laser videodisc.

The trick is in what the disc contains. Compact LaserDiscs offer an entire audio-only record album, plus three or four video clips from it. Typically, the program begins with the videos. Then, an image of the jacket artwork appears on the screen for the audio-only remainder. The audio portion of both the record and video clips is high-quality, CX noise reduction-encoded analog, as well as fully digital. The initial batch of discs were by Chicago, Dream Academy, Starship, a-ha, Mr. Mister, and Colonel Abrams. Compact LaserDisc programs are priced at \$16.95 each.

The CLD is only part of the LaserDisc music scene. The LaserDisc itself continues, for example, to be the single best video source for high-quality jazz programs, an area largely ignored by video publishers. Pioneer Artists introduced the "Signature" series, devoted to jazz and new age music, on the heels of the phenomenal Japanese success of four programs produced by Windham Hill Records and Tokyo's LaserDisc Corporation (another Pioneer subsidiary): *Water's Path*, *Winter Light*, *Autumn Portrait*, and *Winter*.

Signature's 1986 jazz included the two-volume *One Night with Blue Note*, a Town Hall concert; a Chick Corea/Gary Burton show shot live in Tokyo; classical



'This Island Earth,' part of MCA's 'Encore Edition' series.

guitarist Claude Bolling performing with a jazz ensemble; a set by trumpeter Freddie Hubbard at New York's Village Vanguard; and a live performance by Dave Grusin and Lee Ritenour. Most of the Signature releases are mastered with both digital and analog sound.

Already a force in music videocassettes with its Video 45 and Video LP series, Sony has also jumped into the LaserDisc market with predominantly jazz-oriented programs. Chico Hamilton, Weather Report, and blues great B.B. King are among the first releases. Of particular note are three programs in the *Jazz Life* series produced by pianist/musicologist Ben Sidran, featuring Mike Mainieri, Johnny Griffin, and Chico Hamilton. The programs were previously available only via Japanese import.

Perhaps the single biggest breakthrough in the videodisc market in 1986 was the discovery—at last!—that disc fans want more classic films, a message consumers have been screaming for years. While unknown movies or films of marginal quality

might automatically attract videocassette rental regulars at \$2 or \$3 a pop, videodisc buyers think twice about plunking down \$30 to \$40 for an addition to their library. That usually means films of lasting value that can be viewed over and over. Classics fit the bill nicely.

In the release of such films to the mass video market, MCA Home Video must be singled out as the finest publisher of this material. Its "Encore Edition" series has given the video industry a model to follow. Besides using original poster art from the films, MCA almost always offers something extra in its classic disc packages. For example, when running times are under 90 minutes, one side of the disc is pressed in the CAV, standard play, format. This allows for slow motion and single frame analysis of at least a portion of a film. The '50s science-fiction classic *This Island Earth*, W.C. Fields' *The Bank Dick*, and the original Boris Karloff *Mummy* were among those pressed this way in 1986. Musicals, like *Holiday Inn*, contain chapter stops for easy song indexing. Howard Hawks' original *Scarface* with Paul Muni included an alternate ending tested on 1933 sneak preview audiences.

Best of all, many of the discs included copies of the original theatrical trailers and still-frame files of production photos. One standout was the re-release of Alfred Hitchcock's *The Birds*, which included not one but five classic trailers for other Hitchcock films, each a droll mini-movie presided over by the master himself.

MGM/UA issued additional films in its "Golden Anniversary" classics series, like the Myrna Loy/William Powell *Thin Man*, but the series (as well as most disc releases from MGM) seems to have dried up. RCA/Columbia heard the cry for classics, too. Its 1986 discs included *The Wild One*, the seminal '50s gang drama; *The Awful*

Classics old and new on disc (left to right): 'Yojimbo,' 'Elvis/His 1968 Comeback Special,' 'Back to the Future,' and 'Tender Mercies.'



Truth, a 1937 comedy with Cary Grant and Irene Dunne; and *It Came From Beneath the Sea* (1955), with Ray Harryhausen special effects.

Not all classic films come from Hollywood's "golden age." Embassy's videodisc release of the prestigious Janus Films also comes as welcome news. Among the jewels issued from Janus' library last year were Akira Kurosawa's *Yojimbo* (1961), starring Toshiro Mifune; Fritz Lang's *M* (1931), with Peter Lorre; and *Mon Oncle* (1958), starring writer/director Jacques Tati as the endearing M. Hulot.

The Voyager Company, a Los Angeles video publisher, perhaps best understands what movies on videodisc are all about. It specializes in disc releases that, while expensive, truly point to the medium's future. Its versions (on the Criterion label) of *Citizen Kane* and *King Kong* were the first attempts at packaging films for serious historians, buffs, and collectors. Most of its discs are CAV, standard play format to allow slow motion and still-frame analysis, and include second soundtracks devoted to commentary and historical information, as well as a wealth of still frame material.

Voyager's most ambitious project, according to founder Robert Stein, is an elaborate packaging of Orson Welles' *The Magnificent Ambersons*, which includes the film in CAV format, the original, un-cut shooting script in still frame, approximately 400 original storyboard illustrations, footage from a prior silent film version of the story, a second commentary soundtrack by Professor Robert Carringer of the University of Illinois, and finally, a condensed, audio-only radio play by Welles of the story. Whew!

Naturally, film buffs do not live by old films alone. *Back to the Future* demonstrated exactly how good the videodisc is at recreating the movie theatre experience: the crisp, clean, brilliantly-colored transfer

to disc was the year's best and its Dolby Surround soundtrack was surprisingly effective. Though *Ghostbusters* was a 1985 videodisc release, a limited-edition CAV, standard play, disc set found its way into stores in 1986, too, offering the opportunity to study the film's dozens of elaborate special effects frame-by-frame. Another stark contrast between videocassette and videodisc release was *The Jagged Edge*. While the tape release was dark and murky, the disc release of the mystery showcased Matthew Leonetti's superb cinematography.

INTERACTIVE DISCS

Here's where LaserVision shines, yet interactive discs have been few and far between since the medium's introduction in 1978. The past year was not a good one for interactive discs. The only significant 1986 entry was *KnowledgeDisc*, a still-frame disc containing the entire text of Grolier's *Academic American Encyclopedia*, fulfilling the promise that accompanied the introduction of the medium. *KnowledgeDisc* is a valuable addition to a videodisc library, if only because it presents so much information. But, in a medium known for its ability to mix full-motion video, still photos, and audio, the computer-generated screens of text are a bit disappointing, and at \$90 too expensive for many disc users.

Although not a consumer disc (and in fact clearly labelled "experimental" on its packaging), *The Vancouver Disc* is an attempt, by creator Patrick Burns, at archiving the visual history of a city. The one-sided disc contains 16 minutes of time-compressed film (shot at various frame rates and viewable in slow motion and still frame mode) as well as a collection of more than 20,000

stills—historical photos of the city, period postcards, posters, stills from various art collections, photos of neon and street signs, pictures from the Vancouver National History Museum, and a month's worth of satellite weather photos.

These are only two examples of what the videodisc could be. What happened to the interactive disc? Well, no one has yet produced one that has turned a real profit. Since the overall size of the videodisc market in the United States is tiny, the number of potential buyers for any specialized interest disc remains too small for the high budgets needed to produce them. Also, without additional machine intelligence, the videodisc player is not conducive to accessing the information on such discs.

THE FUTURE

What was supposed to happen to the videodisc in the United States—wide public acceptance, a healthy, competitive market with dozens of hardware and software suppliers, and a huge, diverse programming selection—has actually happened in Japan. There are approximately one million LaserVision players in use in that country; the United States has only about 250,000 players in use.

Hitachi, Sony, and Yamaha have all joined Pioneer in the Japanese hardware market, while only Yamaha has shown any interest in the U.S. The Japanese videodisc what's-available is enough to make any LaserVision fan drool. The movies represent an international smorgasbord of delights, from American cult classics (Douglas Trumbull's *Silent Running* and John

continued on page 121

From Germany, 'The World of Oskar Fischinger.'

1986 VMA WINNERS: DISCS

Best Disc-Only Release.....*KnowledgeDisc* (Grolier/Activenture)

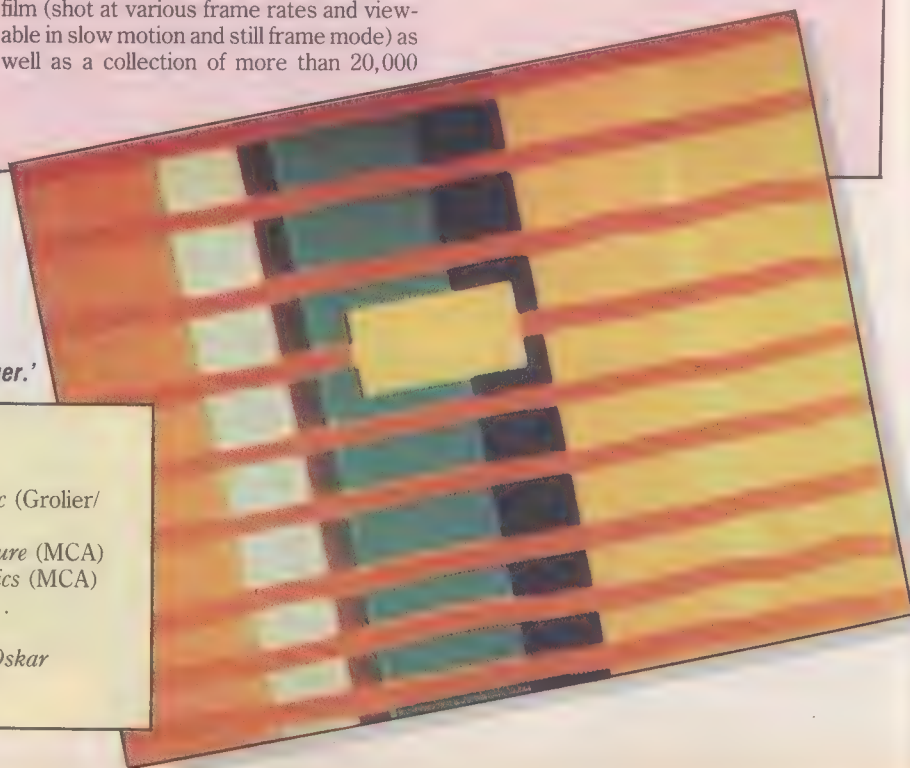
Best Transfer to Disc.....*Back to the Future* (MCA)

Best Disc Series.....*Encore Edition Classics* (MCA)

Most Welcome New Release on Disc.....

Tender Mercies (Thorn)

Best Import-Only Disc.....*The World of Oskar Fischinger* (LaserDisc Corporation; Japan)



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PICKS OF '86

C



critics never run short of opinions (or breath): ask a dozen what they think and you're bound to get at least 13 different viewpoints. It's difficult to predict exactly how a given film is going to be received, especially now that the auteur theory of filmmaking is firmly ensconced in American cinema. Whereas 20 years ago, most moviegoers couldn't name more than one or two directors (Hitchcock and uh...), nowadays, most folks have a bunch of favorites.

Since we publish a wide range of opinion in our programming section throughout the year, we decided to poll a cross-section of video writers—our editors and regular contributors to other publications—for their favorite new tape releases of 1986.

To hedge the obvious question, the results were both predictable and unpredictable. Take the theatrical category, for example. It probably won't surprise you to see *Witness* and *Kiss of the Spider Woman* firmly nestled on top. Both were first-rate flicks with wide appeal. On the other hand, however, it raised a few eyebrows to see *Shoah*, *Re-Animator*, and *Napoleon* sneak onto the Top 10. Not that these films weren't worthy. They simply illustrate what a broad level of taste "mainstream" covers. *Shoah*, the epic documentary on the Holocaust, is probably more notable for its historic value than its mass appeal. *Re-Animator* proves that horror can be intellectually stimulating *and* funny as well. And Abel Gance's



THEATRICAL RELEASES

1. **Witness** (Paramount)
2. **Kiss of the Spider Woman** (Charter)
3. **Salvador** (Vestron)
4. **Brazil** (MCA)
5. **Monterey Pop** (Sony)
6. **Shoah** (Paramount)
7. **Back to the Future** (MCA)
8. **To Live and Die in L.A.** (Vestron)
9. **Re-Animator** (Vestron)
10. **Napoleon** (MCA)

Runners-up: Dont Look Back (Paramount), After Hours (Warner), Out of Africa (MCA), Stop Making Sense (RCA/Columbia), Cocoon (CBS/Fox).

brilliant film of Napoleon's checkered career—rarely shown theatrically—dispels the usual logic that film biographies can't be great art.

Non-theatrical release-wise, we were all secretly pulling for Max Headroom, whom critic Steven Grant referred to as "really David Letterman with dots."

In several months, when the results of our readers' poll are tallied, we'll see just how much agreement there is between people who watch video for a living and everyone else. In the meantime, here's what our video pundits watched—and enjoyed—last year.



NON-THEATRICAL RELEASES

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. Max Headroom: The Original Story (Karl-Lorimar) | 5. The Best of Comic Relief (Karl-Lorimar) |
| 2. The Best of Elvis Costello and the Attractions (CBS/Fox) | 6. The Best of John Belushi (Warner) |
| 3. Dick Clark's Best of Bandstand (Vestron) | 7. Motown Time Capsule: The '60s (MCA) |
| 4. Sunday in the Park with George (Karl-Lorimar) | 8. Otis Redding Live (Sony) |
| | 9. Pete Townshend's Deep End (Atlantic) |
| | 10. Sun City (Karl-Lorimar) |

The voters: Jim Bessman (*Billboard*), David Bleiler (*Home Viewer*), Jim Farber (*New York Daily News*), Mark Fleischmann, Doug Garr, Richard Gehr, Lowell Goldman, Steven Grant, Jonathan Gross (*Toronto Star*), Scott Isler, Louis Kesten, Steven Levy, Frank Lovece, T. Joseph McGrath (*Advocate Newspapers*), Jim Melanson (*Variety*), Marianne Meyer, Paula Parisi (*Home Viewer*), Stan Pinkwas, Stephen Rea (*Philadelphia Enquirer*), Ira Robbins, Andrew Roblin, Wolf Schneider (*Hudson's Video Preview*), Irv Slikin (*Home Viewer*), M. George Stevenson, John Walker, Steve White (*North Shore Magazine*), Stephen Williams (*Newsday*).



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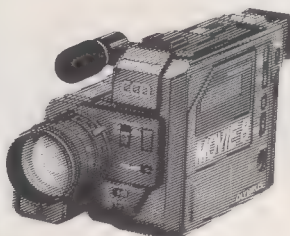


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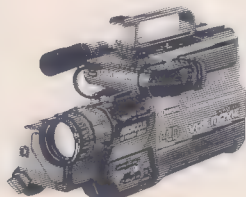


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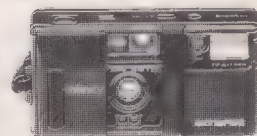
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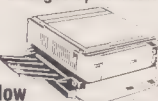


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EXCLUSIVE PREVIEW

TAKE THE TITANIC HOME

*Explorer
Robert Ballard
Recreates His
Undersea Adventure,
Now On Tape*



Like any Titanic buff, Robert Ballard knew just what he wanted to see. "I wanted to [go] down the first-class staircase and into the first-class state-room." Who wouldn't! The double-sided stairway, topped by a huge glass dome, working its way through four decks to the main dining room, was the centerpiece of the White Star Line's great ship. Designed to pamper the luxuriant millionaire egos the Titanic was built to serve, it fast became the social heart of the ship.

By F.X. Flinn



Unlike any other Titanic buff, though, Ballard knew how to go about it. In 1973, he had sketched the Titanic on the ocean floor with a small, remote-controlled, camera-laden robot. Thirteen years later, Ballard sat in the cramped and cold deep-submersible vessel Alvin and watched the small monitors before him display his dream. At the end of the day, after the Alvin had been lifted back aboard the mothership and he'd climbed on deck, he would exult: "We were walking on the moon! We went dancing in the ballroom!"

Just a few months later, the fruits of his triumphant expedition are available as a just-released home video program produced by National Geographic Video. Although the one-hour tape extracts only a small fraction of the nearly 100 hours of video collected on a series of dives this past summer, *Secrets of the Titanic* is certain to be a thrilling boon to Titanic aficionados and anyone else with a sense of history and

It took the latest in marine technology and some of oceanography's greatest minds to find and videotape the Titanic.

adventure.

Officially, the 1986 activity at the Titanic site was a test of the deep ocean search and inspection system that Ballard's Deep Submergence Laboratory at Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution (on the southern tip of Cape Cod, Massachusetts) is developing with funding from the Navy's Office of Naval Research. For Ballard, the Titanic tests were the moment "I'd spent my whole life training for." What he wanted more than anything else was to carefully document the Titanic so that anyone can visit her, albeit at considerably less expense and in complete safety. It was a motivation explorers of the Titanic era would definitely have understood.

EDWARDIAN ADVENTURE

Before the first World War, adventurers mounted expeditions to the Pyramids of Giza, the Lost Valleys of Tibet, even the Grand Canyon. They were intent on documenting whatever they beheld, enabling the emergent middle classes to make armchair visits to the world's furthest-flung destinations via massive books filled with photographs.

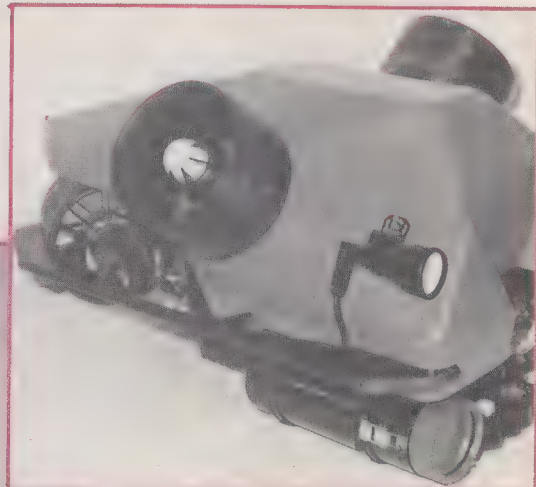
Find one of these Edwardian-era volumes today and you'll be struck by their richness of detail: every stall in a marketplace documented, each turn in the road a

reason to stop and stare at a landscape. Our great-grandparents loved them; the new technologies of photography and gravure printing joined to bring home the Earth's most exotic sights.

The modern world has few remaining places that require an expedition to reach, and photography now employs silicon-intensified target cameras and charge-coupled devices. Although the technology has changed—today's explorer has low-light color video and special digital cameras that produce incredibly high definition black & white wide-angle video—the goal is still to bring a practically inaccessible place home in splendid detail.

The Titanic is located 13,000 feet deep, 1000 miles out in the Atlantic. It sits today as a dual monument: to technological hubris, commercial greed, and fatal misjudgement, as well as to courage, sacrifice, and the 1522 people who lost their lives on April 15, 1912.

The Titanic story is one of the 20th century's great tragedies. Anyone who has



Expedition leader Robert Ballard (top) and his exploration tools: The Argo, being lowered from its mothership (left), and Jason (above).





read a book or seen a movie about her and become entranced knows the desire to actually witness the ship. But there's no going back in time to watch her steam out of Southampton, or to be aboard on the windless, moonless, star-filled night she struck an iceberg and went down. No, to see the Titanic today you must find her where she lies, wrecked at the ocean bottom.

TITANIC TAPE

Secrets of the Titanic lets us share the excitement of visiting a truly exotic place in a fashion the Titanic's contemporaries would have found familiar: at home, using a visual medium under our control, able to stop and linger over a particular image. That it happens to document the gravesite of their dreams for a world made safe by science and technology, and that it arrived at the end of a year that began with the Challenger disaster are genuine ironies. They compound the many ironic aspects of the Titanic's loss, and strengthen the ship's grip on our collective imagination.

Setting sail on her maiden voyage with a who's who cast of first class passengers, the Titanic nevertheless carried only 62 percent of its capacity—mid-April was off-season—and had lifeboat space for just half the 2201 people on board. The Titan-

Jason floating loose from Argo and (inset) a porthole covered by rusticles.



ic's design, incorporating a series of watertight bulkheads, led shipbuilding experts to declare her unsinkable in the hours between the first distress call and confirmation she had sunk. At 46,000 tons, the Titanic was several times the size of anything at sea, except her sister ship, Olympic. She was the triumph of the era, a natural focus for popular imagination.

Her sinking gripped the public in the same way the Challenger explosion would seven decades later: initial disbelief, followed by great sadness and the demand to know how and why such a tragedy could happen. Finally, as the often damning facts came to light, there was a sense of innocence lost. Dramatic changes in the business of shuttling people across the ocean followed.

BALLARD'S DEEP DREAM

Bob Ballard knew he had a serious chance to find the Titanic. After all, he had been "the one standing there" with an interest in deep submersibles and a back-

ground in earth sciences when the two came together in the mid '60s. That development would shortly make him America's leading underwater explorer. His doctoral thesis was devoted to defining the skills and equipment needed to precisely map the sea bed. Shortly after earning his doctorate in marine geology in 1974, he embarked on Project Famous, an underwater expedition to verify plate tectonic theory.

By the late '70s, Ballard had spent more time deep in the oceans than almost anyone. It was exhilarating work, full of such discoveries as new life forms in a Pacific trench near the Galapagos Islands. But it was also frustrating, with bottom dives that took two or three hours each way and left only brief working time. There had to be a better way to explore the sea's depths than "on your hands and knees in the dark with a flashlight for two or three hours a day." An idea began to take shape, and, during a 1980 sabbatical from Woods Hole, Ballard began to design a tool that would give him "telepresence."

Telepresence is Ballard's coinage for the ability to use robotics and television to "project our spirit" to otherwise unreachable places. Implementing telepresence on the ocean floor meant combining the latest

continued on page 122



WHICH CAMCORDER'S FOR YOU?

It's been 15 months since VIDEO published a hands-on field test of the best performing camcorders in each format. Now, twice as many people are buying camcorders as did then, and enough new models have appeared to make the subject ripe for re-evaluation.

As before ("Take The Camcorder Challenge," Nov. 1985), my comparison was not a laboratory evaluation. If you're simply a numbers watcher who believes the best camcorder is determined solely by cold objective performance data, this isn't the story for you. Instead, you should follow the monthly bench tests, which will smoke your calculator. My goal, here, is to bare each model's strengths and weaknesses, and to find out how well top-notch camcorders work facing the hazards and fast-changing conditions of day-to-day field situations.

To probe the personalities of the camcorders, I ran our tests in two phases: outdoor and indoor. The outdoor test took place in New York's Flushing Meadow Park and, the following day, along the Palisades Interstate Parkway vistas. During day one I had an ideal lighting variation: It started with overcast skies and thick clouds, a lot of blue in the light, and then a flat light with soft shadows or no shadows at all. Finally, the sun broke through with brilliant shafts of sunlight which illuminated the scene with full color saturation. All testing was conducted simultaneously so as not to give undue lighting advantage to any one model.

Indoor tests were performed with both tungsten and fluorescent lamps and with a mixture of daylight and artificial light, to check the white balancing systems. I used Extra High Grade TDK tape across the board.

I considered the tangible as well as the intangible. For each camcorder, I tried to evaluate its ability to perform the stated objectives: Does it do what the manufacturer indicates it can do? Is it easy to operate? Is it comfortable, durable, reliable? What are the creative video attributes, and how well do they work? And, is this a camcorder I would buy or recommend to others?

Something for everyone here? Not quite. Just the most exciting elements of the 8mm, VHS and Compact VHS formats—those camcorders we considered interesting enough to warrant a close-up look. High aspiration, top-of-the-line models only. I assembled a quartet of well-regarded models: the Panasonic PV-300 (full size VHS cassette), the RCA Pro Wonder 300 (full size VHS cassette), the Sony CCD-V110 (8mm cassette), and the Zenith VM6200 (Compact VHS cassette).

PANASONIC'S PV-300

Panasonic has been busy lately. It now has three standard half-inch VHS camcorders, topped by its PV-300, which has a contemporary, rounded, almost aerodynamic look. It is feature-laden for serious videography buffs.

The centerpiece of the 300 is a CCD (charge-coupled device) imager. Along with an 8:1 power zoom lens (f/1.2) the imager offers outstanding sensitivity. At low light levels there was little noise and just the slightest hint of trailing when panning across a light source in an otherwise dim shooting environment. It was hard to judge, with the unaided eye, whether the Panasonic or the RCA MOS camcorder had a lower illumination threshold—the two were that close. Both units clearly were a cut above the Sony and

BY MURRAY SLOVICK

CAMCORDER BUYING GUIDE

Brand, Model, Format	Price	Size ¹	Lens	Pickup/Imager, Viewfinder, Sensitivity	Special Features
FEATURED CAMCORDER²					
Panasonic PV-300 VHS	\$2000	8.8 × 4.6 × 15 5.6 lbs.	f/1.2 8:1 power zoom autofocus	2/3" CCD ³ EVF 7 lux	auto/man. white balance, auto iris, auto fade, backlight, date/time generator
RCA Pro Wonder 300 VHS	Under \$1500	7.4 × 6.4 × 14.1 5.6 lbs.	f/1.2 6:1 zoom	2/3" MOS EVF 7 lux	HQ, auto/man. white balance & iris, date/time generator
Sony CCD-V110 8mm	\$1995	3.9 × 7.8 × 14.5 5.2 lbs.	f/1.4 6:1 power zoom autofocus	2/3" CCD EVF 15 lux	character generator, signal feed, fades, wipes
Zenith VM6200 VHS-C	\$1200	6.5 × 4.8 × 8.8 2.9 lbs.	f/1.6 6:1 zoom autofocus	1/2" CCD EVF 15 lux	HQ, auto white balance, auto iris, auto fade, backlight, preview
NEW & RECENT MODELS					
Aiwa⁴ CV-50 8mm	n.a. ⁵	4.9 × 5.7 × 6.9 2.2/2.8 lbs. ⁶	n.a. 15mm fixed focus	2/3" CCD TTL 16 lux	300 line resolution, playback module, edit switch, 2 × search
JVC GR-C9 VHS-C	\$1495	6.5 × 4.8 × 14.5 2.9 lbs.	f/1.6 6:1 zoom autofocus	1/2" CCD EVF 15 lux	HQ, auto white balance, auto iris, auto fade, backlight, preview
JVC⁴ GR-C7 VHS-C	n.a. ⁷	3.7 × 4.4 × 8.2 1.7 lbs.	f/1.6 9.5mm fixed focus	1/2" CCD TTL 10 lux	HQ, record & LP speed only, macro
Minolta CR-3000S AF VHS-C	\$1667	5 × 5 × 13 4.5 lbs.	f/1.2 6:1 zoom autofocus	1/2" Saticon EVF 15 lux	HQ, SP only, auto white balance
Minolta CR-8000S AF 8mm	\$2165	5 × 6 × 12 3 lbs.	f/1.2 6:1 zoom autofocus	2/3" MOS EVF 7 lux	continuous white balance, date generator
NEC EM-A8U 8mm	\$1699	6.8 × 7.4 × 13 4.9 lbs.	f/1.2 6:1 power zoom autofocus	2/3" CCD EVF 7 lux	shoulder mount, color filters, auto white balance
Olympus VX-801 8mm	\$1850	4.9 × 5.3 × 10.1 2.9 lbs.	f/1.2 6:1 zoom autofocus	2/3" CCD EVF 10 lux	auto white balance, adapter can charge 2 batteries at once
Pentax PV-C800A 8mm	\$1749	4.9 × 5.3 × 12 3.2 lbs.	f/1.2 6:1 zoom autofocus	2/3" MOS EVF 7 lux	auto white balance, date switch, auto iris
Sony CCD-V3 Auto Handycam 8mm	\$1500	5.1 × 6.1 × 9.4 3.1 lbs.	f/1.6 2.5:1 zoom autofocus	2/3" CCD EVF 15 lux	auto white balance, auto iris, backlight

1. Height × width × depth; weight is without battery & cassette.

2. These models, featured in the main story, are representative of similar camcorders available under other brand names.

3. CCD: charge coupled device; EVF: electronic viewfinder; MOS: metal oxide semiconductor; TTL: through the lens.

4. Due in late winter/early spring.

5. Not available.

6. With/without playback module.

7. \$995 in Japan.



Four top guns (clockwise from top left): Panasonic's VHS PV-300 OmniMovie; Zenith's Compact VHS VM6200 VideoMovie; RCA's VHS Pro Wonder 300; and Sony's 8mm CCD-V110 Video 8 Pro.

Zenith models in sensitivity.

Outdoors, the Panasonic provided excellent image clarity and, mostly, was color faithful. There was just a faint shift from red to greyish red when panning from a red car to grass. Picture sharpness and detail were well above average, a result of the camcorder's HQ picture enhancement circuitry. With its backlight control (next to the auto fade button), I had little trouble filming against a bright background, maintaining detail throughout.

Audio reproduction was about average, acceptable given that camcorder audio on the whole is still mediocre compared to VHS Hi-Fi or Beta Hi-Fi. The Sony 8mm camcorder, with its AFM audio system, was best of the four, but it wasn't great. Let's just say the audio reproduction of all these machines is nowhere near as good as the picture reproduction. (The Panasonic PV-300 does, however, have an audio dub feature that lets you replace the audio track with music or narration.)

Pictures can be viewed on the Panasonic's 2/3-inch electronic viewfinder. Full VCR controls are provided, including video search and still frame, both with minimal noise and jitter. The 300's one-touch white balance and iris controls easily handled my lighting variations. The viewfinder provides enough information to let you keep track of everything—including instant replay, editing and time/date insertion.

The unique sliding cover for VCR controls is a near miss. Covering the VCR transport buttons automatically puts the camera section into record pause. Opening it activates the transport buttons.

It's a good idea, except that the cover needs a simple locking mechanism; when jostled it opens too easily, and at the wrong times.

Perhaps the most significant characteristic of the Panasonic is its ability to provide all of the components of a video film effectively and unremarkably. All controls are where they should be. The infrared autofocus works fine. Everything is orderly. No surprises. It's a very good, no-nonsense camcorder, but it just isn't a *great* camcorder. Panasonic needs to finish the job. Take a chance. Add a ground breaking feature. Nothing outrageous, such as digital noise reduction (though that's nice) but, say, something already sold on VHS camcorders in Japan. Like a new automatic focusing system that changes the focal state according to the sharpness of an image by using an image sensor. (It's on Matsushita's award-winning Piezofocus version.) Since Piezofocus uses the video signal itself to focus objects, it can accurately focus on anything in the camcorder's field of view, even objects at great distances, which infrared systems can't yet handle.

NEXT, THE PRO WONDER

Compared to the smooth contemporary styling of the Panasonic, RCA's Pro Wonder 300 is an aggressive starfighter, right down to its sharply raked cassette door and red racing stripe. It's all straight lines and hard angles, but you become accustomed to it after some use.

A third generation MOS imager and HQ circuitry reside beneath its silver and black skin. The imager works in concert with a 6:1 power zoom

continued on page 124

PREMINGER'S VIDEO PREMIERES.

Three film classics from the legend...

Otto Preminger.

ADVISE & CONSENT

Among the greatest political movies in history! The unpopular presidential appointment of a new Secretary of State leads to blackmail, scandal and suicide! The all-star cast includes **HENRY FONDA**, **CHARLES LAUGHTON**, **BURGESS MEREDITH**, **GENE TIERNEY**, **DON MURRAY**, **PETER LAWFORD**, **WALTER PIDGEON**, **FRANCHOT TONE** and **LEW AYRES**.

RUNNING TIME: 139 MINUTES/B&W

SAINT JOAN

George Bernard Shaw's classic play was adapted for the screen by Graham Greene and directed by Otto Preminger. Starring **RICHARD WIDMARK**, this controversial classic captured Shaw's grim story of an innocent caught in the web of history. Also starring **RICHARD TODD**, **HARRY ANDREWS** and **JEAN SEBERG** in her film debut.

RUNNING TIME: 171 MINUTES/B&W

THE CARDINAL

Tom Tryon stars as an Irish American priest whose strong commitment to social issues leads him through a labyrinth of Church politics and eventually to the upper echelons of Catholic hierarchy. "The Cardinal" received six Academy Award nominations. The star-studded cast includes **CAROL LYNLEY**, **JOHN SAXON**, **DOROTHY GISH**, **ROBERT MORSE**, **ROMY SCHNEIDER** and **BURGESS MEREDITH**.

RUNNING TIME: 175 MINUTES/COLOR



\$29⁹⁵

3002 VHS/BETA



\$29⁹⁵

3003 VHS/BETA



\$59⁹⁵

7004 VHS/BETA



Programming

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NEWS AND VIEWS

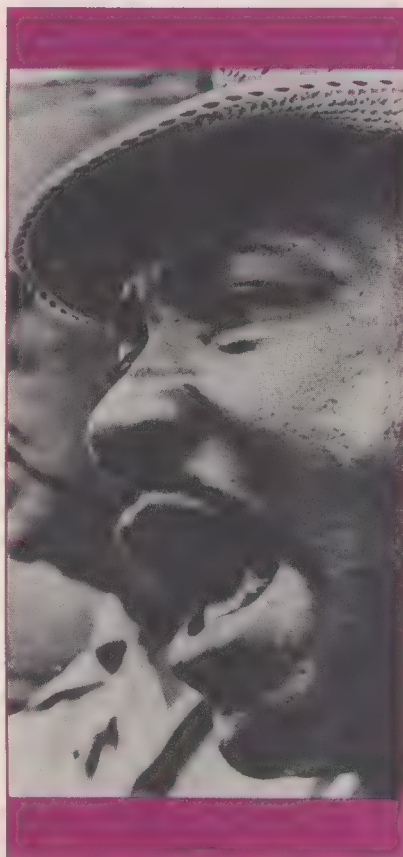
BY MARK FLEISCHMANN

THE MALJACK MOTTO: VIDEO WITH A CONSCIENCE

I have a dream." With those words, Martin Luther King Jr. gave inspiration to a nation. He held our hopes in the palm of his hand. King's historic 1963 speech at the Lincoln Memorial predated home video by more than a decade, but schools and parents can now show it to young ones, thanks to *Martin Luther King: I Have a Dream*. The 25-minute program will include the entire 16-minute speech, plus other relevant footage from the period leading up to the civil rights march on Washington in 1963. It'll be out in time for Christmas.

Turning history into product may seem unusual, but MPI (aka Maljack Productions) is an unusual label. The scrappy independent first surfaced selling low-rent splatter films, but branched out with attention-getters like the marvelous *Prisoner* and *Secret Agent* series, the notorious *Faces of Death*, and Emile de Antonio's left-wing films. In the past year, the three brothers who started the company in 1976 with a few thousand dollars in savings have unveiled an ambitious roster covering Ronald Reagan, AIDS, Great Crimes of the Century, JFK, Joe McCarthy, the Beatles, and Elvis the Pelvis. How's that for variety?

Next up will be *Video from Russia*. American filmmakers traveled to the Soviet Union and filmed spontaneous heart-to-heart chats with Soviet citizens—without permission from the gov-



'Martin Luther King: I Have a Dream' documents a truly historic speech.

ernment. In February, MPI will issue *Country Joe: Vietnam Experience*, a montage of war footage with songs by Country Joe McDonald.

CHIPPING AWAY AT BETAMAX RIGHTS

A bloody video industry civil war is brewing, and this year's Congress will be the battleground where the software side will face off against the hardware side. At issue are new technologies that would raise the Macrovision copy-protection scheme to a higher level of effectiveness.

Macrovision itself has come up with two new systems in addition to its original formulation, and CBS/Fox's technical division has devised one of its own. They all have one thing in common: interlocking hardware/software systems in which a signal encoded on the tape works with circuitry built into the recorder. "In effect," asserts Allan Schlosser, spokesman for the Electronic Industries Association (EIA), "you're castrating the VCR." Program companies want a legal mandate to build one of these new systems into all consumer VCRs.

The first skirmish took place in September before the Senate Judiciary Committee. Present were Macrovision, CBS/Fox, the Motion Picture Association of America (MPAA), and what Macrovision CEO Gary Gwizdala calls "the opposition," the EIA. No legislation was passed or even proposed, but new systems were demonstrated.

"The CBS/Fox and one of the upgraded Macrovisions," says Gwizdala, "would entail some discrete circuitry but would not be extremely expensive. It's possible that over a period of time [de-

signers] could accommodate that circuitry within an existing chip. One we demonstrated would not require a chip but the change of some values [within the VCR], which would be no big deal."

Schlosser disagrees. "Anything that involves tampering with hardware is totally unacceptable," he states flatly. "The concept is repugnant." The EIA feels the new copyguards are nothing less than an attempt to roll back the Supreme Court's landmark Betamax Decision, which legally protected off-air recording in the home for timeshifting purposes. (Recording from cable remains a grey area, while dubbing pre-recorded tapes is plainly illegal.)

Schlosser quotes the testimony of EIA lobbyist Charles Ferris: "Legislation requiring anti-taping chips might be seen as chilling or even reversing the Supreme Court decision. We think the cost, inconvenience, and danger to consumers would be considerable and unwarranted."

Schlosser himself is less diplomatic about what he calls Hollywood's "blunderbuss approach." He claims the copyguard proposals would result in "a time bomb ticking away in each VCR. Years from now a switch could be thrown and it could nullify the timeshifting use of the VCR."

"No one's condoning piracy here," he says. But "there's a burden on [the MPAA's Jack] Valenti to prove the existence of a problem." Valenti has invoked 1987 blank-tape sales projections of 270 million units as evidence that Hollywood is being massively fleeced. "He seems to think that proves something," says Schlosser. "All it proves is that each VCR household buys about eight or nine blank tapes a year. Pretty modest, actually; probably just time-shifting. If anything, this rebuts the notion that people are building [illegal] libraries."

PARTY DOWN WITH UNCLE FRED

Do you have crayons in New York?" asks Uncle Fred in a gentle Florida drawl. The creator of the *Barney Google* and *Snuffy Smith* comic strip is adamant. He wants me to "sprawl out on the floor with your paper, pencil, and crayons and be a kid again" with his how-to-draw videotapes.

"That way," he says, "you'll get the real feeling of participation. When you're drawing the lines and feeling your creation coming through, you get a sense of pride and elation. The first thing you know, you're a happy little kid again! Give it a try." Alright already!



Author's Cartoony

Fred Lasswell is a stocky, silver-haired cherub who wears big round glasses and, when in costume, a red beret and bowtie. He's been in the video business since 1984, when he began selling *Draw and Color Your Very Own Cartoonys Right Along with Uncle Fred* through his own label. The well-received program was later picked up by CBS/Fox's Playhouse label, which brought out installment number two, *Draw and Color a Cartoony Party with Uncle Fred* (\$14.98), last June.

"On the second tape," says Fred, "I tried some different little characters. But the same simplicity is attached to the drawing. Nothing complicated—it's still a fun thing. Some of the little rough edges we had in the first tape are smoothed out."

"The third one will be out in February: *Draw and Color Far-Out Pets with Uncle Fred*. We have eight little songs in there, and live footage of the walrus, penguins, an octopus, a panda, a little turtle, and a kangaroo. Did you see the second tape? Did you draw and color?" This guy could charm the skin off a raccoon.

I don't do things by halves. I can accept my journalistic responsibilities. I go whole hog and run out to get the 64-piece set of Crayola Crayons. Fred's creations are simple—lots of circles and simple lines, curved or straight. He gives coloring instructions but leaves room for creativity. An occasional intervening song or humorous vignette allows time to finish my coloring. In short order I've turned out a duck, piggybank, clown, locomotive, and several other familiar images. This is so much fun I can't believe it's legal.

SURPLUS YOCKS FOR SALE

Remember the scene in *Atomic Cafe* in which a ludicrous civil-defense film shows kids and adults playing "duck and cover" to protect themselves from nuclear attack? Well, *Duck and Cover* is a real film, and you can see it, along with two almost equally ridiculous specimens, in Brookville Productions' *Federal Follies* series.

Brookville prexy Jeffrey J. Ayers found the films while working as an "information technology" consultant to the military. The government didn't know the reels existed—their titles were not listed by the National Audiovisual Center in Maryland. "They were unintentionally funny when they were done and by today's standards make great party tapes," he says. Brookville has compiled six one-hour volumes containing three or four films each; three more in the works.

Some of the films feature known quantities, such as Theodore (Dr. Seuss) Geisel, and director Frank Capra. "Capra," says Ayers, "was associate producer on *Our Job in Germany*, which was actually shelved by General MacArthur when he saw it." The film urges American troops on German soil to treat German natives like poison. "It was destined for the Allied occupation troops but was so extreme they never showed it."

SCANLINES

It took \$50,000 and six months to restore Alexander Korda's *The Four Feathers* (1939), out on tape from Samuel Goldwyn/Embassy. Use of the original three-strip Technicolor negative should make the color fabulous, or at least faithful to the original. Ralph Richardson stars in the adventure spectacle.

Frankenstein is another object of renovations' desires. MCA has restored footage censored from the original 1931 James Whale/Boris Karloff classic. The LaserVision release—you do have a laser player, don't you?—will go for \$29.98.

Tom Shales of the *Washington Post* said of *The Indomitable Teddy Roosevelt*, available on tape from Prism for \$79.95: "I was bowled over. I was knocked for a loop. I was fit to be tied." I was reading three clichés in a row. I was getting really irritated. I was thinking of sending Shales a thesaurus.

FILMS

PRODUCED FOR THEATERS

COBRA

1986. Sylvester Stallone, Brigitte Nielsen, Reni Santoni; dir. George P. Cosmatos; wr. Stallone. 87m. (R) Hi St cc \$79.95. Warner. Image: excel.

If Stallone had made *Cobra* before he became so jaded, it might have been a good movie. It's got a good premise, good totems of good and evil, and lots of carnage. But even by Stallone standards, this is a dog.

The premise is right out of Frank Miller's new existentialist Batman comic. A subterranean gang of mutant scum armed with double-edged ceremonial axes is slaying random people, with a plan to create some unspecified New Order. Like terrorists removed from history, they rally around the ideology of killing. The conventional, so-called humane methods of law enforcement are useless against this slime. Liberalism once again fails in the modern world, only helping perpetuate the brutal sacrifice of innocent people.

Enter *Cobra* (Stallone), leather-clad sadist from the zombie squad, a wooden match in his mouth and the sissified name of Marion Cobretti. He has a giant portrait of Reagan and an answer for pencil-necked liberal geeks who accuse him of being too violent. Grabbing a wimp reporter by the lapels, he forces him, nose-down, to within an inch of a terrorist victim and says, "Tell that to his parents." In due course, *Cobra* will lie with one of the terrorists' targets (Nielsen) and waste every last bad guy. Predictable, but reasonable.

So why does *Cobra* stink? For a bunch of reasons. Foremost, Stallone dashed off this 87-minute blood epic apparently without concern for what type of movie he was writing, or what makes a good action film. Since both hero and villains are so archetypal, they make more sense as cinematic conventions than as real people. When Stallone recognizes this, *Cobra* becomes a movie about movies, and the writing is good. Facing down a supermarket psycho who threatens to blow up the place, Stallone shifts the matchstick from one side of his mouth to



Cobra

the other and says, "I don't care; I don't shop here." But at other times, especially when the political themes come forward, *Cobra* turns into an ideological sno-cone for the knee-jerk reactionaries who've made Sly rich.

In trying so desperately to answer a need, he forgets to create one. Stallone doesn't build tension, either dramatic or romantic, proceeding directly to consummation. Nielsen falls for him without friction, and the mutants never have *Cobra* at a disadvantage. Forget the drama, let's get to the loving and killing.

For what it lacks, as much as for what it offers, this is a bad, cynical movie. The one comfort is that a supposedly automatic hit missed its mark. For once, someone didn't get rich underestimating the intelligence of the American public. Yahoo!

—John Leland

HAIL MARY

1985. Myriem Roussel, Thierry Rode; dir. Jean-Luc Godard. 78m. \$79.95. Vestron. Image: good.

You have to wonder how many of the good people outraged by Jean-Luc Godard's *Hail Mary* have actually seen the thing. It doesn't help that Godard is disingenuous on the subject. "My film is not about the Virgin Mary," he claims. Noooo...It is about a young virgin, Mary,

who, after a strange visit from an angelic girl and her "Uncle Gabriel," inexplicably finds herself pregnant. It's also about the strain this unusual situation places upon Mary's relationship with her boyfriend, Joseph. Joseph drives a taxi; he picks up Gabriel and the girl at an airport, where they've arrived via jet.

The source of inspiration may be obvious, but Godard has other things in mind than merely swiping at religious beliefs. A contrapuntal plot concerns a female student's unhappy affair with her college professor. Sex without love vs. love without sex—*Hail Mary* tackles problems that are much older than the Bible. And it does so with Godardian panache: disconnected snatches of classical music, abrupt transitions, beautiful and/or arresting shots (lots of sun/moon/water imagery here). Once you adapt to Godard's narrative style, the most puzzling aspect of *Hail Mary* is why the voluptuous if vapid heroine was a virgin to begin with.

In the title role, Myriem Roussel gives a wooden performance that's presumably what Godard wants. Her Mary is a *tabula rasa* that allows us to project our own feelings into the character. *Hail Mary* is provocative, but not for religious reasons.

As in its theatrical release, the film is preceded on the videotape by *The Book of Mary*, Anne-Marie Mieville's 29-minute study of a pubescent girl trying to come to terms with her parents' separation. Shot in languorous takes, it's a touching film poem that has nothing to do with Godard's opus except the name of its central character.

—Scott Isler

WHITE HEAT

1949. B&W. James Cagney, Virginia Mayo, Edmond O'Brien; dir. Raoul Walsh. 114m. \$59.98. Key. Image: excel.

ONE, TWO, THREE

1961. B&W. James Cagney, Pamela Tiffin, Horst Buchholz, Arlene Francis; dir. Billy Wilder. 108m. Hi \$59.95. MGM/UA. Image: excel.

These are two of the most important milestones in the career of James Cagney. *White Heat* was his final gangster film and the last of the genre for Warner Bros., the studio most associated with it. By 1949, the Capone and Dillinger era

For key to headings, see *Legend on the first Directory page*.

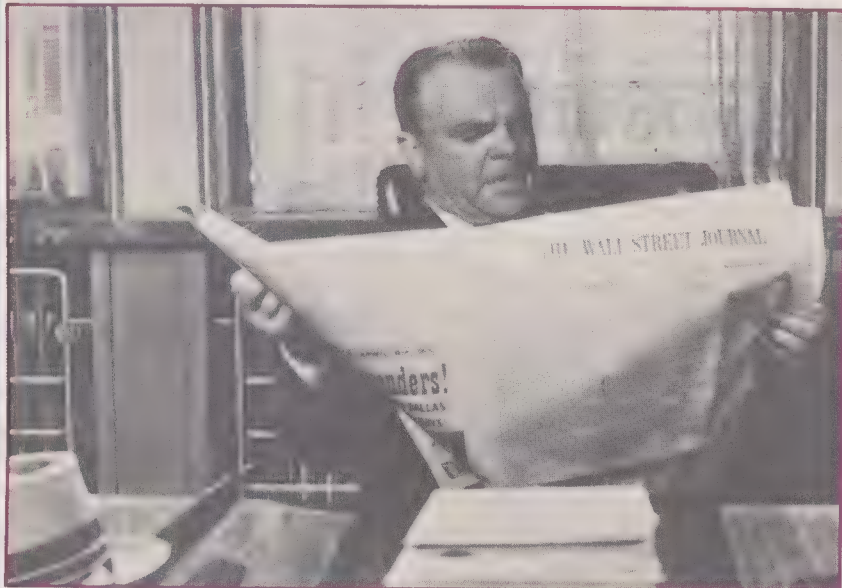
had ended, swept into history by a band of thugs whose goal was not the domination of the rackets, but of the world. *White Heat* is the tale of a cheap hood's decline.

The cold war is the backdrop for *One, Two, Three*, Cagney's exit from moviemaking (save for a cameo 20 years later in *Ragtime*). The story of a Coca-Cola executive in the divided city of Berlin, it is one of the fastest comedies ever, punctuated by staccato dialogue and played to the tune of Khachaturian's manic Sabre Dance.

The 1949 ad campaign for *White Heat* screamed "Cagney is red hot!" and he is indeed at his malicious best as Cody Jarrett, a psychopathic criminal with a nasty oedipal complex. There is nothing remotely likable about this vicious character. O'Brien portrays Fallon, the Treasury Department "T-Man" sent behind bars to befriend him; Mayo is Jarrett's dishy wife; Margaret Wycherly is Cody's tough-as-nails mother. *White Heat* demonstrates just how good Warners' studio filmmaking had become. Every single grey scene moves relentlessly toward the story's erupting climax.

When *One, Two, Three* was released 12 years later, it was Billy Wilder's "explosive new comedy," not Cagney's latest screen role, that received top billing. But both Wilder and his star were at the height of their creative powers. It was sheer brilliance to cast Cagney as C. R. MacNamara, the eager Coke executive whose ticket out of West Germany is parting the Iron Curtain for the Pause that Refreshes. The only thing in his way is a visit from Scarlet Hazeltine (Tiffin), the boss' randy 17-year-old daughter.

One, Two, Three



Her romantic liaison with an East German (Buchholz) forces Mac to employ all of his wife and cunning to protect career and marriage.

One, Two, Three is so rich with dialogue (someone innocently asks how things are going; Mac replies, "I'd rather be in hell with my back broken") and characters—especially three comrades who reprise the almost identical roles from Ernst Lubitsch's *Ninotchka*, also written by Wilder—that this is a practically perfect film.

Both films look (and sound) just fine in their video versions. There's a world of difference between this print of *White Heat* and the one you see on the late show. As for *One, Two, Three*, the only detraction is the scan-and-pan method of converting the Panavision original to the TV screen ratio. —Timothy Onosko

INVADERS FROM MARS

1953. Arthur Franz, Helena Carter, Jimmy Hunt; dir. William Cameron Menzies. 78m. \$19.95. Nostalgia Merchant. Image: good.

INVADERS FROM MARS

1986. Laraine Newman, Timothy Bottoms, Karen Black, Hunter Carson, Jim Hunt; dir. Tobe Hooper. 102m. (PG) \$79.95. Media. Image: good.

They're here. They're inhuman. They're slimy. And they're looking for a few good men. In William Cameron Menzies' 1953 camp classic they're your basic little green men. In the 1986 update by Tobe (Texas Chainsaw Massacre) Hooper they're spindly-legged, snaggle-toothed meatballs. Hooper's remake pays tribute to the vision of Menzies,

who directed and art-directed the original, even quoting shots and sets. But the differences between the two versions are more striking than the similarities.

Both use the same plot: Young David awakens to see a UFO land in the backyard. He soon learns that Martians have mentally enslaved the authority figures in his life—parents, teachers, even cops—using remote-control brain implants inserted at the back of the neck. (Jim Hunt, who played the towheaded lad in the original, becomes a grizzled cop in the remake.) David meets a sympathetic nurse, and together they convince the army to blast the hell out of the space invaders.

The obvious differences are visual. Menzies' Martians sprang straight from stereotype and were no doubt comical even back then; the '86 models look more like Jabba the Hut and raise the ante for repulsiveness. Hooper adds grotesque humor and philosophical touches, including a meditation on the food chain, typical of his in-yo-face approach. His zombified humans are more likely to reveal themselves via aberrant nastiness than mere coldness.

The political differences are subtler. *Invaders I* is a straight Cold War scenario in which the human zombies are domestic traitors and the Martians their KGB manipulators. *Invaders II* invites the Martians' ire with the Search for Extraterrestrial Intelligence—the beings from out there don't want to be found.

One can, of course, take these things too seriously. No one will accuse Karen Black and her son, Hunter Carson, who play the nurse and the kid in the new *Invaders*, of re-creating their roles with straight faces—their zesty shrieking is a most human special effect. They hardly bother a pretense of acting in this self-referential joyride. Their spirit of fun, Hooper's gleeful malice, and Menzies' original tall tale all combine to make *Invaders I* and *II* work together like coffee and crumpets.

—Mark Fleischmann

LUCAS

1986. Corey Haim, Charlie Sheen, Kerri Green; wr./dir. David Seltzer. 100m. (PG-13) Hi St cc \$79.98. CBS/Fox. Image: good.

As a child, I was nearly always the last chosen for the baseball team. Indeed, my love of books and music was so intense that I held in contempt those who indulged in such frivolities as sports. Some even called me a wimp. Although I frequently cried myself to sleep, I knew in my heart that it was I, not they, who had chosen the nobler path. When it came



Lucas

to—ulp—girls . . . I can barely go on. It's all too painful.

With great anticipation, then, did I insert this tape into my VCR. The story of a slight, intellectual 16-year-old's coming of age seemed the perfect cathexis to wash away tortured memories of terminal insecurity. I can identify with those long, lonely hours the diminutive, bespectacled Lucas (Haim) spends on the outside looking in, those endless afternoons spent chasing butterflies and listening to Strauss on an inexpensive tape machine. And when Lucas meets Maggie (Green), the virginal red-haired neighborhood newcomer, it recalled each fleeting, intense sexual awakening of my adolescence. All of them.

Yet how shall I ever forget the agony, the feelings of betrayal I experienced as each winsome love left my lofty company for someone like Cappie (Sheen), the swarthy and muscular football team captain. Like Lucas, I would finally, desperately attempt to integrate myself into the fabric of high school life. But while I never flirted with suicide by joining the football team (as Lucas does) I often considered the possibility. After seeing this movie, I'm glad I never followed through—he gets the crap knocked out of him and Maggie still opts for the football hero. *Lucas* contains other equally profound lessons.

Lucas is indeed a heartwarming film, full of sensitive and bittersweet adolescent *aperçus*. I'm sure there's a little of Lucas in each of us. We must learn to be more tolerant, to respect the differences in stature and intelligence that make us the unique individuals we are. Only by doing this can we achieve world peace. But y'know, by the end of the film I still wanted to see the little twerp suffer.

—Richard Gehr

THE HUSTLER

1961. B&W. Paul Newman, Piper Laurie, George C. Scott, Jackie Gleason; pr./dir. Robert Rossen. 134m. Hi cc \$59.98. Key. Image: good.

When Fast Eddie Felson approaches the double doors of the pool hall, one door opens and one door closes. When Minnesota Fats makes his entrance, both doors open and close. Physical weight equals mythic weight in Robert Rossen's fictionalized tribute to Fats, the pool-table legend. When you're hooked on the legend, Rossen also beguiles you with a visually literate tale of youth's blind ambition.

Paul Newman is Eddie, all glittering eyes and wiseguy looks, while Jackie Gleason incarnates Fats in a perfect la-

conic performance, like an immaculate toad on his lilypad. Piper Laurie contributes vulnerable sexuality as Eddie's suicidally-inclined girlfriend, Sarah, who suffers at the hands of his backer, a malevolent gambler played by George C. Scott. But the movie belongs to Rossen, who produced, directed, and co-wrote the script.

Now in the news again thanks to the Newman/Tom Cruise sequel, *The Color of Money*, *The Hustler* was a critical favorite in 1961. No mystery there: this is what buffs like to call a *movie* movie. Rossen represents passing time with turning hands on a clockdial—oldest trick in the book, but it still works. There's a lot of cutting between set-up shots of Gleason and Newman and the action on the felt, but pool pyrotechnics dominate only the beginning and end. The movie's long midsection is a series of character studies. Fast Eddie wants to beat the Fat Man and he'll screw up his relationships and his whole life if that's what it takes. That fanaticism makes this a man's movie. Men can be such jerks.

This is also a Cinemascope movie, so halves of heads and entire faces disappear outside the scanned frame, especially in Rossen's two-person compositions. No amount of care could solve such a knotty scanning problem, but a side effect is the way it unintentionally highlights Rossen's still-lives of characters in groups of two or three, all in beautiful black & white. Check out the anamorphic squeeze at the end—this may be your only chance to see a thin Jackie Gleason.

—Mark Fleischmann

The Hustler



DEMONS

1986. Dir. Lamberto Bava. 89m. Hi \$79.95. New World. Image: good.

Why even bother defending splatter movies? Some might argue they serve a useful purpose in society by making us confront our fears and overwhelming them with sheer, outrageous excess, but this catharsis theory has grown pretty moldy. All I ask for in a splatter movie is a good plot, decent acting, and a sense of humor. *Demons* has none of those. It's pure, shameless, pedal-to-the-metal gore, thoroughly disgusting. I loved every minute of it.

An aluminum-masked weirdo invites people on the street to a free screening in a renovated old movie theater. The eclectic crowd includes a blind man (!) and a couple of hookers with their belligerent pimp; the movie is a horror film so dumb even Count Floyd wouldn't touch it. When the screen characters start turning into ghouls, so do the folks in the audience.

The rest is largely incomprehensible. The patrons are trapped in the theater, but their efforts to escape are totally stupid. There's a pointless riff involving four coke-snorting punks, and it's all capped by the goofiest *deus ex machina* in years. Just as the last two humans left find there's still no way out, a helicopter drops through the ceiling! Yow!

If you've never encountered gore Italian-style (known locally as *gialli*, or "yellow film"), you'll be stunned by some of the effects here. Producer Dario Argento directed some of last decade's weirdest and bloodiest horror pics, including *Deep Red* and *Suspiria*. Director Lamberto Bava is the son of Mario Bava,

The Quest



Argento's mentor and director of the ax-murder marvel, *Twitch of the Death Nerve*. *Demons* employs most of the methods pioneered by Bava *pere* and Argento: rapid cutting, freaky camera angles, vivid colors, bizarre characters, and best of all, loud, pounding soundtracks. The music—heavy metal by well-known bands mixed with a propulsive synth score—is perfect accompaniment for the incessant visual ugliness.

Bava doesn't miss a trick in the gross-out department, presenting a vast variety of bloodletting. There's decapitation, disembowelment, strangulation, cannibalism, skull-crushing, eye-gouging, and limb severing, all displayed in lingering detail. So by all means see this movie if you think you've got the stomach. It may stretch your tolerance (not to mention your credulity) to the breaking point. Sure it's stupid and pointless, but *Demons* rocks harder than anything since the first Led Zeppelin album.

—Louis Kesten

A BREED APART

1983. Rutger Hauer, Kathleen Turner, Powers Boothe; dir. Philippe Mora. 91m. (R) Hi \$79.95. HBO/Cannon. Image: excel.

If you put a little bit of *Deliverance*, a chunk of *Birdy*, and an episode of *Gentle Ben* in a pot and stirred in Rutger Hauer and Kathleen Turner, what would you have? Whatever it is, apparently nobody wanted any of it in 1983, the date on this beautifully photographed salvage job. The tale of a disturbed Viet vet at one with nature on his own private island is frequently derailed by plot embellishments that are both outlandish and incon-

sequential. The film focuses on a sort of human fox/mercenary, Mike Walker (Booth), hired to steal eagles' eggs for—no kidding—a filthy rich egg collector, who cares not that the theft will render the species extinct. But those darn eggs are situated on land owned by Jim Malden (Hauer), a vet whose idea of an average workday is to wing a couple of poachers and then return to his triplex bark and vine lean-to and paint bird markings on his face. So getting those eggs may be a problem...

Kathleen Turner plays a single mom who runs the general store. She's in love with Malden, whom her son idolizes, but the birdman of the backwoods isn't ready to re-integrate into society just yet. He still hasn't gotten over.... "a tragedy." Enter Walker, who wins everyone's trust. But *we* know what he's after.

There you have the makings of an interesting character study. But, heh heh, wouldn't it be better if we blew up some poachers and threw in an ambitious TV newswoman who wants to investigate this anti-social nature-boy and... *will sleep with anyone to find out?* *A Breed Apart* has enough going for it to almost survive the ridiculous plot wrenchings. Malden's habitat—replete with bear cubs and boa constrictors—is as engaging as a Disney short, and the principal actors are all appealing. But, as my grandpappy used to say, "Blow up a poacher and muddy the stream."

—John Walker

THE QUEST

1986. Henry Thomas, Brian May, Rachel Friend; dir. Brian Trenchard-Smith. 94m. (PG) Hi St ss cc \$79.95. Charter. Image: excel.

Cody (Thomas) is an enterprising young American orphan living with his guardian (May) in a sleepy town in Australia's remote outback. A sense of wonder and an insatiable appetite for adventure lead our little hero through a myriad of perilous escapades, including daredevil bike racing on railroad tracks and diving into a lake of ominous repute.

When the inquisitive lad learns of an ancient myth, he decides to investigate. The only person who can help him unravel the riddle is an old aboriginal medicine man, who convinces Cody he must literally "dance with the devil" in order to gain insight into aborigine folklore. Cody and his spunky girlfriend (Friend) venture deep into the forbidden land.

Director Trenchard-Smith wisely keeps this occasionally portentous story moving along briskly while capturing numerous panoramic views of the magnificent outback. Brian May's high-spirited

score adds immensely to the film's flavor.

A nearly simultaneous theatrical release, *The Quest*'s flaws include a bland performance from *E.T.*'s Thomas, too much mystic mumbo-jumbo, and a protracted finale. Also, while touting the virtues of old-fashioned family films, throw-away lines (a pre-teen girl asks her startled mother "Can you get herpes from too much French kissing?") are a sure sign of the times. —Lowell Goldman

SHORT CIRCUIT

1986. Steve Guttenberg, Ally Sheedy, Fisher Stevens, Austin Pendleton; dir. John Badham. 99m. (PG) Hi St cc \$79.98. CBS/Fox. Image: good.

While millions wait anxiously for Steven Spielberg to let *E.T.* out on tape, here comes *Short Circuit*, the story of an adorably anthropomorphic robot who finds a sympathetic human ally to stave off the designs of malevolent scientists. Just like its extraterrestrial forebear, "No. 5" absorbs pop culture (especially television) like a sponge, making for incessant cute turns—ad quotes, John Wayne impressions, and Three Stooges maneuvers. Ally Sheedy, functioning as Elliot, also has a three-syllable name which the winsome appliance pronounces in the same hesitant manner; the chase scenes are equally familiar. All this lacks is a bicycle, a telephone, and a spaceship.

Steve Guttenberg turns in another bland performance as Dr. Newton Crosby, the nerdy inventor of an expensive breed of battle-equipped super-robots developed for military use. During an exhibition, the hapless (but armed) No. 5 is blitzed by a stray lightning bolt and malfunctions. Finding its way out into the world (which happens to be Oregon), and ignoring all remote control instructions, No. 5 happens upon Stephanie Speck (Sheedy), a flaky animal lover. She helps it/him escape the limits of mere robot-hood and develop human traits and skills, like disco dancing and driving. No. 5 becomes enamored of the life it's not supposed to have, and becomes self-defensive about the notion of "disassembly." Meanwhile, Crosby and his sidekick, Ben, a malaprop-spouting East Indian ("originally from Bakersfield") who provides occasional embarrassing, semi-offensive laughs, set out to bring the machine back before it and the army destroy each other.

Eric Allard deserves credit for designing believable, seemingly functional hardware capable of expressing personality, and Sheedy is likable enough in a



The Karate Kid Part II

non-Brat Pack role. John Badham's direction is thankfully paced a few gears faster than the usual read-my-lips level of stupidity, so the movie gets where it's going promptly. Still, *Short Circuit*'s story, characters, and romantic resolution are all utterly predictable, so it hardly makes a difference. Those who find such movies cute and amusing will be gently pleased by this slight, well-packaged product. But if the idea of *E.T.* with rivets leaves you bored or bummed, don't wire this into your VCR. —Ira Robbins

THE KARATE KID PART II

1986. Ralph Macchio, Pat Morita; dir. John G. Avildsen. 113m. (PG) Hi St ss cc \$79.95. RCA/Columbia. Image: good.

With a title like *The Karate Kid Part II*, one can't count on anything original from this inevitable sequel. However, one might expect to find more of what made the original genuinely pleasurable. *The Karate Kid* tells of the underdog who becomes a hero through sheer pluck, and boasts appealing performances by its two stars; *Part II*, alas, has far less going for it. Even the same actors and director seem utterly bored by the premise.

The story of wise old Miyagi (Morita) and his protegee Daniel (Macchio) picks up minutes after the teenager has vanquished his foes in a public karate competition. They head for Okinawa, where Miyagi's father lies on his deathbed. A heap of trouble awaits in the form of Yuki (Nobu McCarthy), his sweetheart from younger days, and Sato (Danny Kemekona), whose pre-arranged marriage to Yuki was sabotaged by Miyagi's public declaration of affection. Sato has become a hard-hearted land baron, and wants to fight Miyagi to the death to

restore his tarnished honor.

Most of the film consists of Sato trying to goad his nonviolent rival into a confrontation. They eye each other warily, scene after scene, no doubt wondering why this chain of non-events takes nearly two hours. Daniel, meanwhile, has formulaic little encounters of his own, although the movie easily could have proceeded without him. As before, he shares an innocent romance with a lovely young girl, and finds himself the prey of a gang of toughs, this time led by Sato's evil nephew, Chosen. All ends happily, of course. Sato is magically transformed from bad guy to good guy after saintly Miyagi saves his life in a storm; Daniel trounces Chosen in a climactic bout choreographed exactly like the one that closed *The Karate Kid*.

Simply put, *Part II* is a bore. It's not the painfully predictable plot (the first film worked in spite of that)—what sinks this film is its lack of character development. In the original, Miyagi and Daniel slowly become friends, as the teenager undergoes his transformation from loser to winner. Nothing new happens between them here. Daniel continues to play the callow, wide-eyed youth; Miyagi still spouts vaguely humorous aphorisms with amazing regularity and smiles benignly at Daniel's naivete. They're like an old married couple.

The Pacific location photography—sunsets, monuments, etc.—is agreeable, and Macchio and Morita remain likable performers, even in the duller scenes. But *The Karate Kid Part II* is bankrupt. If those responsible fail to camouflage their cynicism in *Karate Kid III*, the result could be genuinely distasteful. —Jon Young

VIDEOS

MADE FOR HOME VIEWING



The Best of Dan Aykroyd

THE BEST OF DAN AYKROYD

1986 comp. 57m. \$24.98. Warner. Image: good.

What greater honor is there than a posthumous tribute to someone who hasn't died yet? Certainly no one from *Saturday Night Live's* oft-tagged golden era is more deserving than Dan Aykroyd, the zen master of comedy acting. In a medium where the biggest ego generally wins the ham, Aykroyd eschewed tag lines and simply submerged himself in his characters, becoming the consummate comic force by playing his own straight-man.

Given the breadth of Aykroyd's *SNL* accomplishments, this compilation is sure to omit somebody's favorite sketch, and includes a few that seem relatively inconsequential. But, unlike *The Best of John Belushi*, which lacked the benefit of active participation from its principal, Aykroyd is credited here as Supervising Producer, so one presumes he either considers this his best work or thinks the tape-buying public does.

Contents: One swinging Czech Bros. sketch with Steve Martin; Bass-O-Matic; a segment of "Bad Ballet," with Leonard Pinth Garnel actually partaking in the production; unscrupulous toy-

maker Irwin Mainway trying to convince consumer advocate Jane Curtin of the merits of his Halloween costume line, featuring the Invisible Pedestrian; Fred Garvin—Male Prostitute; a hyper explanation of the new Metric Alphabet; cable TV sex fiend E. Buzz Miller's *Animal Kingdom*; a mustachioed Nixon in the throes of his "Final Days"; Conehead Halloween; "The French Chef," wherein Julia Child bleeds to death, ho, ho, ho; a Crazy Eddie parody; a commercial for Pocket Pal, the gadget that lets you know when you're in for a mid-air collision (and, trivia buffs, the only *SNL* script ever purchased from a non-affiliated source, namely SCTV's Dave Thomas); and a Blues Bros. snippet under the credit roll.

Well, that's the menu, for better or worse. If you don't see what you like, complain to the owner of the Hard Rock Cafe.

—John Walker

RUNNING OUT OF LUCK

1986. Mick Jagger, Jerry Hall, Rae Dawn Chong, Dennis Hopper; dir. Julien Temple. 88m. (R) Hi St \$79.98. CBS/Fox. Image: good.

Though it's not the perfect picture of a major movie musical, I'm certain Gilbert and Sullivan would have liked this charm-

ing trifle. A Mick Jagger vanity production (imagine that!), *Running Out of Luck* pitches its stakes somewhere between MGM Territory and Video-Clip Country, taking the concept of narrative rock-video in a somewhat different direction. In Ray Davies' *Return to Waterloo*—a surrealistic drama with songs—the plot propels the music. In Jagger's movie, it's the other way around. As mythic Mick crawls and wanders through Brazilian jungles, prisons, and hotels (all shot on location), the plot is as traditionally slight and implausible as anything Gene Kelly ever tapped and winked through. Director Temple has had practice at this: he directed the 20-minute David Bowie musical, *Jazzin' for Blue Jean*. Yet, while *Running Out of Luck* is only a so-so musical, it's a very funny comedy.

Except for some moments here and there, none of the nine songs taken from Jagger's *She's the Boss* LP challenge career classics like "Satisfaction." A couple of musical sequences, however, are great fun—witness the Keystone Kops casino of "Lucky in Love," or the New-York-in-Rio riot of "Half a Loaf." Yet a much simpler bit—penniless Mick in a rural general store, singing and dancing to "Jumping Jack Flash" in a vain effort to convince the Portuguese-speaking store owners that he's who he says he is—has more wit than any other piece here.

That routine points to the saving grace of this tour-de-farce, namely Jagger's self-deprecating style. Though he's as misogynistic as ever—envisioning Rae Dawn Chong, Jerry Hall, and every other woman here as either servant or whore—Mick does present himself unflatteringly bruised, broken, and stupid (though always ready for a party). Which is not a bad analogy, come to think of it, for most of us on this planet.

—Frank Lovece

HARD TO HANDLE

1986. Bob Dylan with Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers; dir. Gillian Armstrong. 56m. Hi St \$29.98. CBS/Fox. Image: good.

When you get right down to it, rock concert videos are very much like pornography. They document a staged act with little or no attempt to filter the event

through any artistic consciousness. What counts is that viewers get what they pay for with no distractions, and preferably in close-up. The medium here is not the message.

The current generation of Bob Dylan fans will get exactly what they pay for with *Hard to Handle*, a one-hour excerpt (originally produced for HBO) from Dylan's 1986 Australian tour, subsequently continued in the States, with Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers as backing band. Director Armstrong (*My Brilliant Career*, *Starstruck*) lends credibility to the project, but it's doubtful this tape will go to the top of her resume.

From the opening medium close-up of the dour, leather-clad singer, the camera tracks Dylan like a hunted animal. This is not for Petty fans, though the Heartbreakers churn up fierce accompaniment while remaining discreetly out of sight. Indeed, the only touch of humor is Dylan striking guitar-hero poses in the spotlight while Mike Campbell plays a guitar solo.

The ten songs offer a chronological (if not artistic) balance between Dylan's '60s and '80s output. He deconstructs classics like "It's Alright, Ma" (performed solo) and "Like a Rolling Stone" with the self-parodistic delivery that infuriates rock critics. In contrast, the solo "Girl from the North Country" receives a sensitive reading, caught in two lengthy shots. The other highlight is Dylan smiling during "Ballad of a Thin Man."

A Louma crane provides occasionally grotesque angles on the star; otherwise, *Hard to Handle* is straightforward visually, smoothly edited during songs, no pauses in between. There are perhaps two glimpses of the audience—Dylan does his time onstage, you watch. That's the deal. He's come a long way since *Dont Look Back*, and you might be left wondering about the significance of this video's title.

—Scott Isler

MIAMI VICE II: THE PRODIGAL SON

1985. Don Johnson, Philip Michael Thomas, Edward Olmos, Penn Jillette, Pam Grier; dir. Paul Michael Glaser. 99m. Hi St \$29.95. MCA. Image: excel.

This movie-length episode—the second season opener of the stylish TV cop show—propels and compels with a sub-theme that could have transformed every episode that followed had the producers the will to explore it. In a few moving minutes as a godlike Wall St. mogul, the great Julian Beck teaches Sonny Crockett (Johnson) and Rico Tubbs (Thomas) about the geopolitics of the drug trade, about multimillion-dollar loans to Latin American borrowers "who aren't going



Miami Vice II: The Prodigal Son

to repay us by selling straw bags and clay pots..."

This shadow of some bigger picture touches every action, every move. *The Prodigal Son* is about capitalism run wild, about "fiscal responsibility" blinding ethics and morality for the sake of a buck. Read the newspapers—scriptwriter Daniel Pyne obviously does.

On a more prosaic note, this is the episode that shifted *Vice*'s original balance to the Don Johnson show. The titular "prodigal son" is supposed to be Tubbs, the renegade New York cop come home. Glenn Frey's "You Belong to the City" was originally Tubbs' theme song for this show, but it was given instead to country-boy Crockett. Thomas does manage some fun with his role, as when Tubbs starts getting his New York street-talk back, but it's Crockett who makes all the decisions.

Neither this nor a ridiculous final shoot-out detract much from what is a stunning piece of television. The soundtrack runs from Leon Redbone to the Neville Brothers, and character acting makes a comeback with theater vets Charles Ludlam and Miguel Pinero, musicians Gene Simmons and Peter Allen, and even anti-magician Penn Jillette. Maybe the producers of *Vice* can't do a show like this every week, but I'm glad they can manage it every year.

—Frank Lovece

HOROWITZ IN MOSCOW

1986. Dir. Brian Large. 111m. Hi St \$39.95. MGM/UA. Image: good.

Sixty-one years after he left the Soviet Union, pianist Vladimir Horowitz gave a series of 1986 concerts in Moscow and

Leningrad. Long renowned as the greatest technician of our time, Horowitz at 82 is remarkably like he was at 42 or 62—a careful yet theatrical player who sticks to his own (wide-ranging) turf. This Moscow concert featured pieces by all of "his" composers—Scarlatti, Rachmaninoff, Scriabin, Schubert, Liszt, Schumann, Moskowski, Chopin—as well as Mozart's Sonata in C Major.

What is remarkable about his choice, especially given the artist's age and reputation, is its concentration on the lyrical and/or intense. The virtuosity is displayed in quiet feats of technical resourcefulness, rather than in Horowitz's characteristic grand, soaring, yet never vulgar fortissimos. He has chosen to bring his art to bear on lesser known Romantic and pre-Romantic works, demonstrating his affinity for subtle phrasings and *sotto voce* reinterpretations of standard repertoire.

His surprisingly light and gentle Mozart and Rachmaninoff playing early in the concert, along with his well known Scarlatti work, show Horowitz to be a master of singing lines and vocal transparency and balance, essential yet often overlooked qualities. Horowitz in Moscow or anywhere else is one of this century's great gifts to music, and *Horowitz in Moscow*'s re-mastered (from the original TV production) digital soundtrack provides some of the best recent evidence to support that view.

—M. George Stevenson

FEDERAL FOLLIES

1986 comp. B&W/Color. 3 vols. 50m. ea. \$24.95 ea. Brookville Productions (Box 1505, Gracie Station, New York, N.Y. 10028). Image: good.

Yes, dear reader, the Federal Government does have a sense of humor, although it's mostly unintentional. This series, culled from the Defense Department's unclassified movie vaults, is funny because of its historical juxtaposition. Propaganda films such as *Our Job in Japan* (Vol. II) and *Our Job in Germany* (Vol. III), done for overseas peacekeeping forces after World War II, may have seemed serious in the late 1940s, but seen today exhibit the extremest form of American xenophobia. The German film warns U.S. soldiers to be wary of the citizenry. "Be suspicious of everyone," it says, for the German "mentality" is always dangerous. Note the director: Theodore (Dr. Seuss) Geisel, who gets to use lots of confiscated Nazi footage. At times, it recalls Leni Riefenstahl's mesmerizing films.

Much of the stuff in *Federal Follies* is downright boring. For example, Dis-

ney's entry, *Cleanliness Brings Health* (Vol. II), is a short animated piece which tells Latin American visitors not to use corn fields as a latrine. *Primordial Soup*, also on the tape, is Julia Child at her most soporific. *Blondes Prefer Gentleman* (Vol. I) and *How to Succeed With Brunettes* (Vol. II) are standard Navy films meant to teach dating and table manners. Lines like "Don't drink the finger bowl!" evoke the tone of *Reefer Madness*, and most assuredly were laughed at by enlisted men when first screened.

Two are quite interesting, however. *Trip to Nowhere* (Vol. III), made for the Navy in 1968 during the height of hallucinogen popularity, is a morality tale where three seamen experiment with LSD. One guy, who happens to be a radar officer on an aircraft carrier, suffers flashbacks. The trip scenes are unrealistic (as opposed to unreal), using Ken Russell-type color blurs and imitation Doors music.

The other is *Duck and Cover* (Vol. I), a classic Uncle Sam how-to film. When the "flash" from the nuclear warhead hits, you simply follow the title's advice, even if you have to use a newspaper to cover your head. Good plan. —Doug Garr

THE GREATEST MOMENTS IN PHILADELPHIA SPORTS HISTORY

1986. Hosted by Harry Kalas; nar. John Doremus; pr. Steve Sabol. 45m. \$19.95. NFL Films. Image: good.

OK, wise guys, I know what you're saying: are there really 45 minutes' worth of great moments in Philadelphia sports history? Well, boo to you. As a native Philadelphian, I wouldn't have complained if this well-constructed video had gone on for three hours.

I'm biased, but not nearly as much as the tape, which is wonderful when it sticks to an expert panel's selections (the greatest of the great being Tug McGraw's final strikeout in the 1980 World Series). The footage is never short of excellent, and sometimes astonishing. Other times, though, this looks like a Chamber of Commerce film, complete with a horridly-dressed host telling us stuff we don't want to hear about golf tournaments and women's basketball. Meanwhile, the focus on the "city of winners" that Philly became in the '70s and '80s ignores the frustrating reality that was until recently the city's legacy. Worst of all, nary a word about boobirds, and no mention of my choice for the greatest Philadelphia Sports Moment—disgruntled Eagles fans booing Santa Claus!

Unless you're a Philadelphian, ignore this and wait until your home town does something similar. Greatest Moments in Cleveland Sports History? Should run at least 15 minutes. —Steven Levy

A YOUNG CHILDREN'S CONCERT WITH RAFFI

1984. Pr./dir. David Devine. 45m. Hi St D \$29.95. A&M. Image: good.

Even if you don't know who Raffi is, chances are your kids—if they're between 2 and 8—are major-league fans, and this tape will show you why. An engaging singer with a clear, mellow voice and clever, comical rhymes, Raffi's gentle good humor generates strong interaction with kids. He encourages your youngest music critics to sing, clap, and stomp along with a set of old and new kids' classics.

For those who missed (or miss) Raffi's concerts, this tape is the next best thing to being there. A straightforward camera style, alternating between the player onstage and his enthusiastic audience, provides a nice you-are-there feeling that should put home viewers into the sing-along spirit with a minimum of parental goading.

But even if they're willing, don't send your kids off alone to watch the show. It's truly family viewing; the songs and warmth are so contagious that you can't help but be drawn in. Go ahead—learn all the words to "Wheels on the Bus" and, when you get to the outrageous animal rhymes of "Down by the Bay," see if you don't laugh as loud as the little one in your lap.

A Young Children's Concert With Raffi



Raffi isn't a cartoon character, a TV spin-off, or an advertising concept. He's a nice man with a warm voice and a bagful of good songs that will delight you as much as he does your kids.

—Marianne Meyer

THE WORLD OF DIGITAL AUDIO

1986. Len Feldman. 60m. \$19.95. Audio Magazine/Sony. Image: good.

The pathology of compact disc collecting—the costly side-effect of now-economically attractive technology—is about the only thing not covered in this one-hour technical primer. Len Feldman, senior technical editor of *Audio Magazine* and an inner-circle electronics journalist, taped this lecture while giving a series of digital audio seminars co-sponsored by Sony.

His presentation is excellent. He begins with a 40-second definition of the digital/analog difference and distinguishes between 8, 14, and 16-bit systems. Then he offers an insider's look at the development of CD player manufacturing to the current fourth generation: the elimination of multiclock design, the three-beam laser, and digital/analog filtering problems. Non-CD digital technologies like PCM, 8mm, and DAT get their share of attention.

Feldman packs lots of information into his hour. For intermediate techies who want a fast lesson in digital basics, the tape is succinct and fascinating. Average consumers looking for the right player would be better off spending time reading the audio press, though Feldman does underscore one tip for regular folks: the electronics biz moves fast and new-generation models have a lot more of the bugs worked out.

—Mark Fleischmann

AMERICAN STORYTELLING SERIES

1986. Introduced by David Holt. 8 vols. 30m. ea. \$99 ea. H.W. Wilson (950 University Ave., Bronx, N.Y. 10452.) Image: good.

Granted, listening to a bunch of storytellers explain the existence of mosquitoes may not be as exciting as anticipating what Joan Collins will be wearing after the station break. But there is something engaging and pleasantly anachronistic about the *American Storytelling Series*—small reprieves from TV's usual exploits and intrigues.

Ron Evans, on the second volume, tells a curious story about the arrival of television at an African village. At first, the villagers were glued to the set, but after a few days things got back to nor-

mal, the set abandoned. When an American asked a villager why this happened, he answered simply, "We don't need TV. We have storytellers." But the American persisted, "Don't you think the TV knows more stories than your storytellers?" The villager answered, "The TV may know more stories, but our storytellers know me."

For those of us who thrive in the world of electricity and have never come closer to the oral tradition than an occasional story from Uncle Harry about the good ol' days, the need for storytellers may be difficult to fathom. This ambitious series makes a sincere effort to fit the oral tradition into our visual world, and seems most alive when enjoying that challenge.

The performers get plenty of room to be spontaneous and natural. Most of the stories were taped in one take, freeing them of TV artificiality. Camerawork is direct, framing the performers' faces, although the director follows more physical raconteurs, like Jackson Gillman as he prances and coos through Rudyard Kipling's tale about how the whale got its throat.

These modern-day yarn-spinners come from many varied traditions—native American and slave history, tales of the Old West, and more. The storytellers themselves reflect a wonderfully eclectic collection of races and ages. Unlike the old days, they no longer roam backfields and country roads to ply their trade; libraries and lecture halls are their new homes, and this video series is being marketed with that clearly in mind. The steep price is geared to institutional budgets, not individual consumers, but the programs are well worth the time you'll spend watching them.

—Julia Lisella

American Storytelling Series



"MOMMY I CAN LEARN MYSELF"

1986. Anim. 4 cas. 30m. ea. V only. \$15.95 ea. *Kards for Kids* (3567 Kennedy Rd., South Plainfield, N.J. 07080). Image: good.

What can you say about an educational children's series that misspells two words in its introduction? Unfortunately, in the case of "Mommy I Can Learn Myself," it's downhill from there. These videotapes are an outgrowth from a line of children's stationery which offers fill-in-the-blank thank-you notes, get-well cards, etc., done in a childlike scrawl. Regardless of how you feel about the stationery (does it encourage communication or promote laziness?), the video line offers none of that interaction, save for a short quiz segment at the end of each show where viewers parrot the lessons. The characters in the tape call this bit "playing school." Your kids will probably call it a bore.

And that's the worst thing about these tapes, from a child's point of view—they're simply no fun. Narrated by a cloying pair of siblings named Oopsey and Billy, the tapes vary little from a "do this, don't do that" nagging singsong. (Because the topics are broader, *Feelings* and *New Experiences* are slightly less preachy than *Manners* and *Safety*.) Save for the brightly colored stick people illustrations, there's nothing kid-silly or amusing about these lessons. It *does* feel like school. So much for entertainment.

Parents, too, will be disappointed, and perhaps angered by the commercial manipulation at work here. As Oopsey and Billy say goodbye in each tape, they promise "we will be back." Then a voice comes on to hawk the other tapes in the

series, followed by a pitch for the stationery. Parents who buy kidvid to escape the huckstering of Saturday morning cartoons will find this shameless.

—Marianne Meyer

MARTY ROBBINS... HIS LEGACY

1986. 62m. Hi \$29.95. Hubbell McDonald Corp. (c/o Andrew Thompson, Inc., 338 J St., Salt Lake City, Utah 84103). Image: good.

MARTY ROBBINS... FOR FANS ONLY

30m. Hi \$19.95. Hubbell McDonald Corp. Image: good.

One of the greatest country singers, the late Marty Robbins was so enormously popular that he could get away with some of the dumbest, hammiest in-concert behavior imaginable, even by country music standards. Luckily, the *Legacy* volume of this two-cassette release (a third should be available soon) edits out most of the inter-song corn from a 1981 Florida concert, leaving only flawlessly delivered treatments of 22 songs.

This doesn't mean Robbins isn't shown obnoxiously mugging, clowning, preening, and mincing through his classic hits like Prince doing a Dean Martin impersonation—just that it rarely negates his purely sung, if not emotionally committed renditions. Nor that the female fans who swarm the stage don't eat up every bit of ostentation. The poorly-edited audience reaction shots show that these true believers would settle for just about anything from their hero.

Robbins, who died of a heart attack just one year later, may not have been outwardly reverential to his material, but inside it was all there. Outfitted in a gaudy white rhinestone-studded cowboy suit and strumming his small, downward-tilted acoustic guitar, the singer sings simply and beautifully, effortlessly sliding into the smooth falsetto register on a note-perfect reading of "Devil Woman" and clenching his teeth but not missing the same high reaches of the immortal "El Paso." And when he plays it pretty straight—like in the real and loving tribute "My Woman, My Woman, My Wife," or the swirling, guilt-drenched ballad of despair, "You Gave Me a Mountain"—when the feeling is real, the results are unforgettable.

The *Fans Only* tape is largely that, containing jokes and other drivel excised from the concert program. It does contain four other tunes, including the great song-about-a-song, "El Paso City."

—Jim Bessman

Directory

NEW RELEASES ON TAPE AND DISC

ACTION

Ashanti, Land of No Mercy. 1979. Michael Caine, Peter Ustinov, Omar Sharif, Rex Harrison, William Holden. Doctor trails slave trader who kidnapped his wife. 102m. \$79.95. T.W.E.

The Black Windmill. 1974. Michael Caine, Donald Pleasence; pr./dir. Don Siegel. British agent gets no government help in tracking down son's kidnappers. 102m. (PG) Hi D \$59.95. MCA.

Blonde in Black Leather. 1977. Claudia Cardinale, Monica Vitti. Bored wife takes off with lady biker. 88m. Hi \$59.95. Charter.

Blood Money. 1980. Bryan Brown, John Flaus, Chrissie

James. Terminally ill criminal arranges to go out with a bang. 64m. Hi \$69.95. Sony.

Born American. 1986. Mike Norris, Steve Durham, David Coburn. U.S. youths hiking in U.S.S.R. captured and imprisoned as spies. 93m. (R) \$79.95. Continental.

Captain America. 1979. Reb Brown, Len Birman, Heather Menzies. More accurately, son of Captain America, who carries on in dad's footsteps. Made for TV. 98m. Hi \$39.95. MCA.

Captain America II: Death Too Soon. 1979. Reb Brown, Connie Sellecca, Christopher Lee. Costumed superhero saves U.S. from terrorist plot. 88m. Hi D \$39.95. MCA.

Car Crash. 1984. Joey Travolta. Demolition derby race driver.

102m. \$69.95. Sony.

The Clan of the Cave Bear. 1986. Daryl Hannah, Pamela Reed; wr. John Sayles. Girl adopted by Neanderthal tribe rebels against its male leaders. 100m. (R) LV St ss CX cc \$34.98. CBS/Fox.

Cobra. 1986. Sylvester Stallone, Brigitte Nielsen, Reni Santoni. Match-chomping detective coolly exterminates band of serial killers. 87m. (R) Hi St ss cc \$79.95. LV St ss CX \$34.98. Warner.

Cut and Run. 1985. Lisa Blount, Willie Aames, Karen Black. Pair of TV reporters on trail of drug smugglers. 87m. (R) B Hi V \$79.95. New World.

Deadly Encounter. 1984. Larry Hagman, Susan Anspach. Helicopter pilot helps ex-girlfriend elude mobsters. 90m. \$59.95. Continental.

Ghostwarrior. 1986. Hiroshi Fujioka, Janet Julian. Samurai found frozen in lake thaws out on way to autopsy. 86m. \$79.95. Vestron.

Gray Lady Down. 1977. Charlton Heston, David Carradine, Stacy Keach, Ned Beatty. Nuclear sub rammed by freighter off Cape Cod. 111m. (PG) Hi D \$59.95. MCA.

Highlander. 1986. Sean Connery, Christopher Lambert, Roxanne Hart. Rival immortals from medieval Scotland do battle in modern-day Manhattan. 110m. (R) Hi \$79.95. HBO/Cannon.

The Hot Box. 1972. Andrea Cagan, Margaret Markov; pr. Jonathan Demme; wr. Demme, Joe Viola. Nurses at tropic outpost kidnapped by guerillas, then caged by sadistic government official. 85m. (R) Hi \$59.95. Embassy.

Hot Rod. 1979. Robert Culp, Pernel Roberts. Drag race sponsor tries to secure son's victory by framing chief competitor. 97m. (G) Hi \$59.95. Charter.

Jack London's Tales of the Klondike Vols. 2-4. 1981. Nar. Orson Welles. Stories of gold diggers in frontier Canada. **Vol. 2:** Eva Gabor in *The Scorn of Women*. **Vol. 3:** Robert Carradine in *In a Far Country*. **Vol. 4:** John Ireland in *Race for Number One*. 60m. ea. \$19.95 ea. Active.

Jake Speed. 1986. Wayne Crawford, John Hurt. Adventurer helps woman find kidnapped sister. 93m. (PG) LV \$34.95. Image.

The Last of the Mohicans. 1936. B&W. Randolph Scott, Binnie Barnes, Bruce Cabot. Adaptation of James Fenimore Cooper tale: 18th century siege of Fort Hen-

PROGRAMMING LEGEND

DATE

Varies according to type of program as follows: **Films:** original theatrical release. **Made-for-broadcast:** first telecast. **Made-for-video:** first release in any format. **Compilations:** production of collected work.

FORMAT

All programs are available in Beta and VHS unless noted. All programs on videodisc are also available on videocassette unless noted. The following abbreviations apply:

B: Beta videocassette
V: VHS videocassette
8: 8mm videocassette
LV: LaserVision videodisc
CED: CED videodisc

AUDIO FEATURES

All available audio information is provided. The following abbreviations apply:

St: stereo
Hi: Hi-Fi
D: Dolby noise reduction
ss: surround sound
cc: closed-captioned for the hearing impaired
CX: CX encoded

IMAGE QUALITY

For theatrical releases, this rating refers to the transfer quality and overall visual appearance. For non-theatrical productions, it refers to overall visual quality.

excel.: exceptionally attractive and/or faithful to the original

good: adequate but unremarkable

poor: seriously flawed

ETCETERA

Official MPAA ratings (G, PG, PG-13, R) are provided when available. All programs are in color unless noted. Prices are not generally given for CED discs.

anim: animated
B&W: black & white
cas.: videocassette
comp.: compilation
dir.: directed by
m.: minutes
nar.: narrated by
pr: produced by
RE: reissue
sub.: subtitled
wr.: written by

Editors' choices in the "Directory" are highlighted with red titles.

ry by Indians. 91m. Price n.a. Late.

Legend. 1986. Tom Cruise, Mia Sara, Tim Curry; dir. Ridley Scott. Conquering demon checked by young warrior. 89m. (PG) Hi St ss cc \$79.95. LV St ss CX cc \$34.98. MCA.

The Meanest Men in the West. 1976. Charles Bronson, Lee Marvin, Lee J. Cobb, Charles Grodin; dir. Sam Fuller, Charles S. Dubin. Gunslinger determined to settle old score with stepbrother. 92m. (PG) Hi D \$79.95. MCA.

Murphy's Law. 1986. Charles Bronson, Carrie Snodgrass, Angel Tompkins. Cop arrested for murder of ex-wife escapes to hunt real killer. 101m. (R) Hi cc \$79.95. Media.

Night Partners. 1983. Yvette Mimieux, Diana Canova, Larry Linville. Pair of housewives dedicated to helping crime victims. 96m. \$39.95. U.S.A.

No Retreat, No Surrender. 1985. Kurt McKinney, J.W. Fails. Karate student could save ailing martial arts school by winning big match. 85m. (PG) B Hi V \$79.95. New World.

Pirates. 1986. Walter Matthau, Damien Thomas, Richard Pearson; dir. Roman Polanski. Matthau as slightly lunatic ship's captain in swashbuckler played for laughs. 124m. (PG-13) Hi St ss \$79.95. U.S.A.

P.O.W.—The Escape. 1986. David Carradine. Rescue of American soldiers held in Vietnam. 90m. (R) LV \$34.95. Image.

Platypus Cove. 1986. Paul Smith. Australian: adopted teen gets blame for boat accident, tracks down those responsible. 93m. Hi \$59.95. Embassy.

The Quest. 1986. Henry Thomas, Tony Barry. Boy hunts down legendary swamp monster. 94m. (PG) Hi St ss D cc \$79.95. Charter.

RAD. 1986. Bill Allen, Lori Loughlin, Talia Shire, Jack Weston. Bicycle daredevil determined to qualify for championship race. 94m. (PG) LV St ss CX cc \$34.95. Embassy.

Rin Tin Tin, Hero of the West. 1955; colorized 1986. James Brown, Lee Aaker. Canine samaritan. 75m. \$39.95. Monterey.

Runaway Island. Pair of fugitive children in colonial Australia. 96m. Hi \$59.95. Sony.

Samar. 1962. George Montgomery, Gilbert Roland, Joan O'Brien. Excessively strict superiors drive penal colony commander to free prisoners. 89m. \$59.95. Monterey.

Saturday Night Serials Vol. 5. 1986 comp. B&W. Single chapters of *The Phantom Empire* (Gene Autry), *The Phantom Creeps* (Bela Lugosi), *Undersea Kingdom* (Lon Chaney, Jr.), *Junior G-Men* (Dead End Kids). 60m. \$29.95. Rhino.

The Scarlet Pimpernel. 1982. Anthony Andrews, Jane Seymour, Ian McKellan; dir. Clive Donner. Made-for-TV version of classic swashbuckler: dashing freedom

CASH REGISTER

Special promotions and other pricing news

Tapes promoting holiday cheer still linger at your local video store at prices that should make you merry. Roach has reduced its colorized version of *It's a Wonderful Life* from \$39.95 to \$19.95. Paramount offers *Mister Magoo's Christmas Carol*, *The Trolls and the Christmas Express* and *Yes Virginia, There Is a Santa Claus* at \$14.95 apiece, while MGM/UA lets you find out *How the Grinch Stole Christmas* for the same price. Also from MGM/UA are a production of *The Nutcracker* with Mikhail Baryshnikov for \$29.95 and the delightful feature *A Christmas Story* for \$29.95.

RCA/Columbia officially wraps up its "Wrap Up Hollywood" promotion on New Year's Eve, but stores with extra stock may extend it. If you're lucky, \$29.95 will still get you *Stop Making Sense*, *Starman*, *Ghostbusters*, *On the Waterfront*, *A Passage to India*, *Oliver!*, *Tootsie*, *Funny Girl* or one of a dozen others.

You need be *The Prisoner* of your desire no longer. MPI has re-released all seventeen episodes of the classic TV show at \$29.95 apiece, down from \$39.95. The other major rerun event of the video season, a pair of vintage Barbra Streisand specials originally aired on CBS, also comes to you at a discount: *My Name is Barbra*, and *Color Me Barbra* are priced at \$29.98 apiece; purchase them together and the price drops to \$24.99 each.

If you're a fan of Errol Flynn and/or Gary Cooper movies, make note of Key's "24 Karat Gold Classics" promotion. The roster of \$29.98 titles includes vintage Flynn vehicles *Captain Blood*, *Charge of the Light Brigade*, *The Dawn Patrol* (with David Niven, Basil Rathbone and Donald Crisp), *Gentleman Jim* and the restored version of *The Sea Hawk*. Among "The Gary Cooper Collection" are *The Fountainhead*, *Pride of the Yankees* and *Sergeant York*. Each cassette comes with a "collector's booklet" detailing the film's production history and initial public reception.

—Steve Daly

fighter poses as foppish count. 142m. \$69.95. Vestron.

Secret Agent Vols. 5, 6. 1968. B&W. Patrick McGeehan. Episodes from TV series about daring sleuth. *Yesterday's Enemies*, *The Professionals*. 55m. ea. \$19.95 ea. MPI.

Soldier's Revenge. 1985. John Savage, Maria Socas. Returning Vietnam vet meets reception so cool he's driven back into combat. 92m. \$69.95. T.W.E.

SpaceCamp. 1986. Kate Capshaw, Lea Thompson, Tom Skerritt. Group of teenagers attending NASA student program accidentally launched into space. 115m. (PG) Hi \$79.95. Vestron.

Suddenly. 1954; colorized 1986. Frank Sinatra, Sterling Hayden, Nancy Gates. Sinatra as brains

behind plan to assassinate President. 76m. \$29.95. Roach.

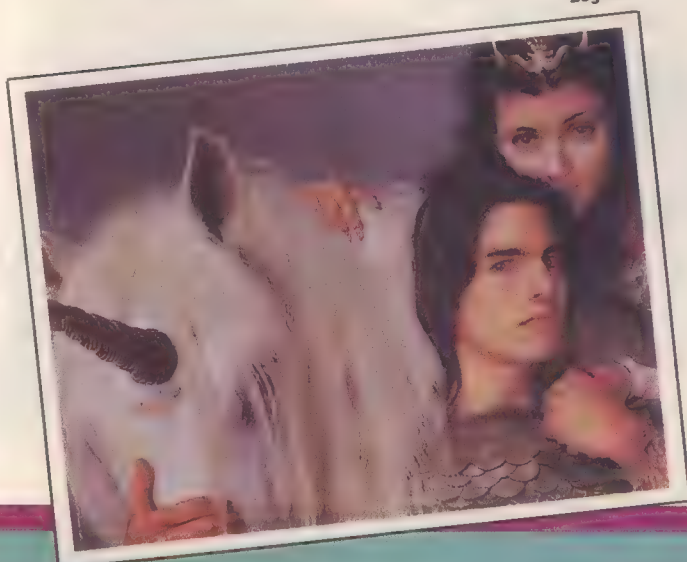
The Tigress. 1978. Dyanne Thorne. Russian torturess flees to Canada to start brothel; angry victim catches up with her. 85m. (R) Hi \$59.95. Charter.

Violated. 1984. John Heard, J.C. Quinn. New York detective investigates murders at home of drug peddler. 88m. \$69.95. Vestron.

Winchester '73. 1950. B&W. James Stewart, Shelley Winters, Will Geer, Tony Curtis, Rock Hudson; dir. Anthony Mann. Gunslinger out to avenge father's slaying. New narration by Stewart on second audio track. 82m. LV \$29.98. MCA.

Woman Hunt. 1972. John Ashley, Lisa Todd. Trio of kidnapped

Legend



women pursued through jungle by deranged hunters. 81m. (R) Hi \$59.95. Charter.

Women in Cages. 1971. Judy Brown, Pam Grier, Roberta Collins. Matron of women's prison hires bandits to recapture three escapees. 78m. (R) Hi \$59.95. Charter.



The Adventures of Teddy Ruxpin. 1986. anim. Tie-in with talking toy bear: Ruxpin and Grubby the Octopede encounter the slovenly Mudblups. 46m. \$24.95. Children's.

The Brothers Grimm Fairy Tales. 1986 comp. anim. *The Seven Ravens* ('71), *Little Red Riding Hood* ('79). 35m. cc \$14.95. New World.

Cartoon Classics Vol. 6. 1986 comp. anim. *Neptune Nonsense*, *Christmas Comes but Once a Year*, *Jack Frost*, *Jerky Turkey*. 30m. \$9.95. Continental.

Challenge of the Gobots Vos. 6, 7. 1986. anim. Exploits of form-changing robots. Vol. 6: *Speed Is of the Essence*, *Renegade Alliance*, *Cold Spell*. Vol. 7: *The Gift*, *The Secret of Halley's Comet*, *Crime Wave*. 67m. ea. \$29.95 ea. Children's.

The Dogs Who Stopped the War. 1984. Pooch and friends manage to halt escalating gang rivalry. 90m. (G) Hi \$79.95. HBO/Canon.

The Electric Grandmother. 1981. Maureen Stapleton, Edward Herrmann. Ray Bradbury story: robot granny wins over skeptical little girl. 50m. cc \$19.95. New World.

The Elephant's Child. 1986. anim. Kipling story as told by Jack Nicholson. 30m. Hi St Price n.a. Random.

Fables of Harry Allard. 1979. anim. *It's Nice to Have a Wolf Around the House*: wolf tries to bring happiness to old man and his pets. *Miss Nelson Is Missing*: arrival of nasty substitute makes class wish they had old teacher back. 30m. cc \$14.95. New World.

For Better or Worse: The Bestest Present. 1985. anim. Lost toy bunny. 23m. Hi St \$14.95. Family.

Gary Coleman for Safety's Sake: Home Safe Home. 1986. Guide aimed at parents and children, with host Coleman outlining accident prevention, first aid, kitchen safety, more. 40m. \$19.95. New World.

George and the Christmas Star. 1985. anim. Young boy dissatisfied with paper star atop tree pursues real one. Music by Paul Anka. 25m. \$14.95. Paramount.

The Gold Bug. 1979. Anthony Michael Hall, Roberts Blossom, Geoffrey Holder. Poe story: boy's hunt for hidden treasure. 45m. cc \$19.95. New World.

Heathcliff & the Catillac Cats. 1986. anim. *Meow Meow Island*, *Iron Cats*. 25m. Hi \$14.95. Magic.

Jack Frost. 1979. anim. Voices of Buddy Hackett, Robert Morse, Dave Garroway. Mr. Frost becomes human for a day. 48m. \$29.95. Lightning.

Jem: Truly Outrageous. 1986. anim. Kiddie rock videos. 90m. \$24.95. Family.

Kid Power Vols. 1-6. 1986 anim. Cast of ethnically diverse characters in series of programs dealing with prejudice, responsibility, honesty, other wholesome topics. *Teamwork*, *Polly and the General*, *Don't Fake It!*, *The Circus Caper*, *Take a Hike*, *Pain, Pain, Go Away*. 30m. ea. \$14.95 ea. Prism.

Labyrinth. 1986. David Bowie, Jennifer Connelly; dir. Jim Henson. Girl enters maze to rescue kidnapped brother from ruler of strange underground world. 101m. cc (PG) Hi St ss \$79.95. Embassy.

Rambo: The Rescue. 1986. anim. First in series of cartoon adventures based on popular—and violent—Sylvester Stallone films. 100m. Hi St \$39.95. Family.

The Real Ghostbusters: A Fright at the Opera, Venkman's Ghost Repellers. 1986. anim. Cartoon based on popular film. 25m. Hi \$14.95. Magic.

Rudolph and Frosty's Christmas in July. 1979. anim. Voices of

Red Buttons, Ethel Merman, Mickey Rooney, Shelley Winters. 50m. \$29.95. Lightning.

Rudolph's Shiny New Year. 1979. anim. puppets. Voices of Red Skelton, Frank Gorshin. Kidnapping of Baby New Year means December 31st could last forever. 50m. \$29.95. Lightning.

Rudyard Kipling's Classic Stories. 1970. anim. *How the First Letter Was Written*, *How the Whale Got His Throat*, *How the Elephant Got His Trunk*. 25m. cc \$14.95. New World.

Santa Claus: The Movie. 1985. Dudley Moore, John Lithgow, David Huddleston, Burgess Meredith. Evil toy manufacturer hires one of Santa's elves to put St. Nick out of business. 104m. (PG) LV St ss CX \$34.95. Image.

Shiver, Gobble and Snore. 1970. anim. Adaptations of four educational stories by Marie Winn: title tale, *The Town That Had No Policeman*, *The Fisherman Who Needed a Knife*, *The Kings of Snark*. 45m. cc \$19.95. New World.

Silverhawks: Sky Shadow, The Gold Shield. 1986. anim. Tie-in with new toy line. 2 cas. 30m. ea. \$14.95 ea. Karl.

Silverhawks: The Origin Story. 1986. anim. Celestial guardians: tie-in with new toy line. 101m. \$69.95. Karl.

The Steadfast Tin Soldier. 1986. anim. Jeremy Irons narrates picture-book version of Hans Christian Andersen story. 30m. Hi St Price n.a. Random.

The Ugly Duckling. 1986. anim. Hans Christian Andersen story as told by Cher. 30m. Hi St Price n.a. Random.

Voltar. 1986. anim. Rival scientist copies robot, dispatches squad to destroy the original. 60m. \$24.95. Continental.

Wrinkles in Need of Cuddles. 1986. Puppet adventures featuring toy character Wrinkles. 48m. \$19.95. Children's.

The Year Without Santa Claus. 1979. anim. puppets. Voices of Mickey Rooney, Shirley Booth. Exhausted Santa takes a holiday, thereby spoiling everyone else's. 50m. \$29.95. Lightning.



Big City Comedy. 1986. Live performance featuring Billy Crystal, John Candy, Martin Mull, Fred Willard, Tim Kazurinsky. 56m. LV \$29.95. Vestron.

Commercial Mania. 1986 comp. B&W. Sampler of inane TV spots from '50s and '60s. 60m. \$29.95. Rhino.

Couch Potato Classics: Tee Vee Treasures 1, 2. 1986 comps. B&W. Sample evenings from TV's golden age; 4 shows per vol. plus commercials, shorts, public service announcements. Programs include *Federal Men in Action* with Charles Bronson, *The Jam Session* with Jack Benny

Wrinkles in Need of Cuddles





Valet Girls

and guests Fred MacMurray, Dan Dailey, Dick Powell and Kirk Douglas, installments of *What's My Line?*, *People Are Fun*, *Howdy Doody*, *Lights Out*. 120m. ea. \$39.95 ea. Rhino.

Crimewave. 1986. Louise Lasser, Paul L. Smith. Businessman hires exterminators to eliminate his partner. 83m. (PG-13) Hi \$79.95. Charter.

Dr. Duck's Super Secret All-Purpose Sauce. 1986 comp. Whoopi Goldberg, Ed Begley Jr., Martin Mull, Jimmy Buffett, Jay Leno, Garry Shandling, Jim Stafford, others. Collection of comedy sketches and musical performances assembled by Michael Nesmith. 90m. Hi St \$39.95. Pacific.

Duck Soup. 1933. B&W. Marx Brothers, Margaret Dumont; dir. Leo McCarey. War spoof.

The Gig. 1985. Wayne Rogers, Cleavon Little. Group of middle-aged amateur jazz musicians en route to first pro booking. 95m. \$79.95. Karl.

The Gods Must Be Crazy. 1984. Xao, Marius Weyers, Sandra Prinsloo, Jamie Uys. Popular farce from South Africa about tribe disrupted by discovery of empty Coke bottle. Dubbed. 109m. (PG) Hi cc \$79.98. Playhouse.

Going My Way. 1944. B&W. Bing Crosby, Barry Fitzgerald, Gene Lockhart; wr./dir. Leo McCarey. Retiring pastor alarmed by methods of his appointed successor. 126m. LV (3 sides) CX \$39.98. MCA.

In Trouble. 1967. Julie LaChapelle, Katherine Mousseau. Pregnant girl explains herself to

Alda, Richard Pryor. 60m. \$39.95. Karl.

The Money Pit. 1986. Tom Hanks, Shelley Long, Alexander Godunov; dir. Richard Benjamin. Slapstick about couple trying to refurbish house. 91m. (PG) LV St ss CX cc \$34.98. MCA.

The Munsters' Revenge. 1981. Fred Gwynne, Yvonne DeCarlo, Al Lewis, Sid Caesar. TV-movie: mad scientist creates robot likenesses of Herman and Grandpa. 96m. Hi D \$39.95. MCA.

Oddballs. 1984. Foster Brooks, Jason Sorokin. Trio of summer campers determined to go all the way before going home. 92m. (PG-13) \$79.95. Lightning.

One More Saturday Night. 1986. Al Franken, Tom Davis, Nan Woods. Franken and Davis as rock musicians passing through small Minnesota town. 96m. (R) Hi St D \$79.95. RCA/Columbia.

Red Skelton's Christmas Dinner. 1981. Red Skelton, Imogene Coca, Vincent Price. TV special with Freddy the Freeloader, others. 60m. \$39.95. U.S.A.

Saving Grace. 1986. Tom Conti, Fernando Rey, Giancarlo Giannini. Pope Leo XIV, feeling isolated, visits small village incognito. 112m. (PG) Hi cc \$79.95. LV CX \$34.95. Embassy.

Say Yes. 1986. Jonathan Winters, Art Hindle, Logan Ramsey. Tycoon's grandson stands to inherit fortune if he can land wife in

will between med school dean, trio of student pranksters. 92m. (R) \$79.95. Media.

Sweet Liberty. 1986. Alan Alda, Michael Caine, Michelle Pfeiffer; wr./dir. Alda. College prof appalled by efforts to turn his novel on American Revolution into racy teen comedy film. 107m. (PG) Hi D cc \$79.95. MCA.

Transatlantic Merry-Go-Round. 1934. B&W. Jack Benny, Gene Raymond, Patsy Kelly. Benny as star of radio troupe broadcasting from ocean liner. 90m. Price n.a. Late.

Utopia. 1952. B&W. Laurel & Hardy inherit island rich in uranium ore. Includes interview with Hardy on film's production. 82m. \$19.95. Roach.

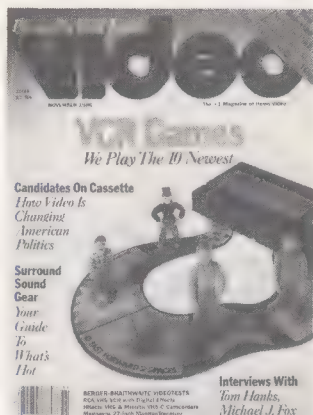
Valet Girls. 1986. Meri D. Marshall, April Stewart, Christopher Weeks. Rival Hollywood parking services, one all-male, the other all-female. 89m. \$79.95. Vestron.

The Worst of Hollywood Vols. 1-3. 1986 comps. of notable clinkers. **Vol. 1:** *Maniac* ('34), dir. Dwain Esper; *Protect Your Daughter* ('29). **Vol. 2:** Eric von Stroheim in *Fugitive Road* ('34); *Crime of Dr. Crespi* ('35). **Vol. 3:** Lila Lee, Snub Pollard in *Nation Aflame* ('37); Betty Grable in *Probation* ('32). \$29.95 ea. Silvermine.

Your Place...Or Mine. 1982. Tyne Daly, Bonnie Franklin, Peter Bonerz, Robert Klein. Latchmaker's efforts to hitch wo single friends prove fruitless ntil day they're accidentally andcuffed together. 93m. 39.95. U.S.A.

our Show of Shows Vol. 8. 1986 comp. B&W. Sid Caesar, Imogene Coca, Carl Reiner, Howard Morris. Further highlights om TV program. 66m. \$39.95. Unicorn.

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nos. 1985. Kirk Douglas, Dorothy McGuire, Elizabeth Montgomery, Pat Morita, Ray Walton. New nursing home resident challenges tyrannical head nurse. 91m. Hi \$69.95. Sony.

women pursued through jungle by deranged hunters. 81m. (R) Hi \$59.95. Charter.

Women in Cages. 1971. Judy Brown, Pam Grier, Roberta Collins. Matron of women's prison hires bandits to recapture three escapees. 78m. (R) Hi \$59.95. Charter.



The Adventures of Teddy Ruxpin. 1986. anim. Tie-in with talking toy bear: Ruxpin and Grubby the Octopede encounter the slovenly Mudblups. 46m. \$24.95. Children's.

The Brothers Grimm Fairy Tales. 1986 comp. anim. *The Seven Ravens* ('71), *Little Red Riding Hood* ('79). 35m. cc \$14.95. New World.

Cartoon Classics Vol. 6. 1986 comp. anim. *Neptune Nonsense*, *Christmas Comes but Once a Year*, *Jack Frost*, *Jerky Turkey*. 30m. \$9.95. Continental.

Challenge of the Gobots Vos. 6, 7. 1986. anim. Exploits of form-changing robots. Vol. 6: *Speed Is of the Essence*, *Renegade Alliance*, *Cold Spell*. Vol. 7: *The Gift*, *The Secret of Halley's Comet*, *Crime Wave*. 67m. ea. \$29.95 ea. Children's.

The Dogs Who Stopped the W 1984. Pooch and friends man to halt escalating gang rival 90m. (G) Hi \$79.95. HBO/C non.

The Electric Grandmother. 19 Maureen Stapleton, Edw. Herrmann. Ray Bradbury stc robot granny wins over skept little girl. 50m. cc \$19.95. N World.

The Elephant's Child. 1986. an Kipling story as told by Jack N: olson. 30m. Hi St Price n.a. R dom.

Fables of Harry Allard. 19 anim. *It's Nice to Have a V Around the House*: wolf tries bring happiness to old man his pets. *Miss Nelson Is Miss*: arrival of nasty substitute ma class wish they had old' teac back. 30m. cc \$14.95. N World.

For Better or Worse: The Bestest Present. 1985. anim. Lost toy bunny. 23m. Hi St \$14.95. Family.

Gary Coleman for Safety's Sake: Home Safe Home. 1986. Guide aimed at parents and children, with host Coleman outlining accident prevention, first aid, kitchen safety, more. 40m. \$19.95. New World.

George and the Christmas Star. 1985. anim. Young boy dissatisfied with paper star atop tree pursues real one. Music by Paul Anka. 25m. \$14.95. Paramount.

The Gold Bug. 1979. Anthony Michael Hall, Roberts Blossom, Geoffrey Holder. Poe story: boy's hunt for hidden treasure. 45m. cc \$19.95. New World.

Heathcliff & the Catillac Cats. 1986. anim. *Meow Meow Island*, *Iron Cats*. 25m. Hi \$14.95. Magic.

Jack Frost. 1979. anim. Voices of Buddy Hackett, Robert Morse, Dave Garroway. Mr. Frost becomes human for ■ day. 48m. \$29.95. Lightning.

Jem: Truly Outrageous. 1986. anim. Kiddie rock videos. 90m. \$24.95. Family.

Kid Power Vols. 1-6. 1986 anim. Cast of ethnically diverse characters in series of programs dealing with prejudice, responsibility, honesty, other wholesome topics. *Teamwork*, *Polly and the*

Red Buttons, Ethel Merman, Mickey Rooney, Shelley Winters. 50m. \$29.95. Lightning.

Rudolph's Shiny New Year. 1979. anim. puppets. Voices of Red Skelton, Frank Gorshin. Kidnapping of Baby New Year means December 31st could last forever. 50m. \$29.95. Lightning.

Rudyard Kipling's Classic Stories. 1970. anim. *How the First Letter Was Written*, *How the Whale Got His Throat*, *How the Elephant Got His Trunk*. 25m. cc \$14.95. New World.

Santa Claus: The Movie. 1985. Dudley Moore, John Lithgow, David Huddleston, Burgess Meredith. Evil toy manufacturer hires one of Santa's elves to put St. Nick out of business. 104m. (PG) LV St ss CX \$34.95. Image.

Shiver, Gobble and Snore. 1970. anim. Adaptations of four educational stories by Marie Winn: title tale, *The Town That Had No Policeman*, *The Fisherman Who Needed a Knife*, *The Kings of Snark*. 45m. cc \$19.95. New World.

Silverhawks: Sky Shadow, The Gold Shield. 1986. anim. Tie-in with new toy line. 2 cas. 30m. ea. \$14.95 ea. Karl.

Silverhawks: The Origin Story. 1986. anim. Celestial guardians: tie-in with new toy line. 101m. \$69.95. Karl.

The Steadfast Tin Soldier. 1986.

The Ugly Duckling. 1986. anim. Hans Christian Andersen story as told by Cher. 30m. Hi St Price n.a. Random.

Voltar. 1986. anim. Rival scientist copies robot, dispatches squad to destroy the original. 60m. \$24.95. Continental.

Wrinkles in Need of Cuddles. 1986. Puppet adventures featuring toy character Wrinkles. 48m. \$19.95. Children's.

The Year Without Santa Claus. 1979. anim. puppets. Voices of Mickey Rooney, Shirley Booth. Exhausted Santa takes a holiday, thereby spoiling everyone else's. 50m. \$29.95. Lightning.



Big City Comedy. 1986. Live performance featuring Billy Crystal, John Candy, Martin Mull, Fred Willard, Tim Kazurinsky. 56m. LV \$29.95. Vestron.

Commercial Mania. 1986 comp. B&W. Sampler of inane TV spots from '50s and '60s. 60m. \$29.95. Rhino.

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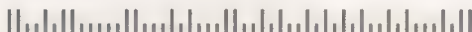
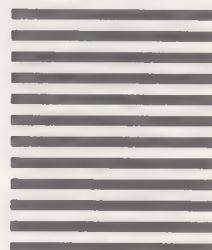
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Valet Girls

and guests Fred MacMurray, Dan Dailey, Dick Powell and Kirk Douglas, installments of *What's My Line?*, *People Are Fun*, *Howdy Doody*, *Lights Out*. 120m. ea. \$39.95 ea. Rhino.

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Dr. Duck's Super Secret All-Purpose Sauce. 1986 comp. Whoopi Goldberg, Ed Begley Jr., Martin Mull, Jimmy Buffett, Jay Leno, Garry Shandling, Jim Stafford, others. Collection of comedy sketches and musical performances assembled by Michael Nesmith. 90m. Hi St \$39.95. Pacific.

Duck Soup. 1933. B&W. Marx Brothers, Margaret Dumont; dir. Leo McCarey. War spoof with Groucho as Rufus T. Firefly, Prime Minister of Freedonia. Includes orig. theatrical trailer. 70m. LV (side 2 CAV) CX \$29.98. MCA.

Federal Follies Vols. 1-3. 1986 comps. Ludicrous government-produced films on dating etiquette, personal hygiene, nuclear safety, other important matters. Vol. 1: *Blondes Prefer Gentlemen*, *The Decision Is Yours*, *Duck and Cover*. Vol. 2: *Cleanliness Brings Health* (anim.), *Primordial Soup*, *Our Job in Japan*, *How to Succeed with Brunettes*. Vol. 3: *Trip to Where*, *Our Job in Germany*. Approx. 50m. ea. \$24.95 ea. Brookville Productions (Box 1505, Gracie Station, New York, N.Y. 10028).

Find the Lady. 1976. John Candy, Mickey Rooney. Detective tails hood hired to kidnap socialite. 90m. \$59.95. Continental.

The Gig. 1985. Wayne Rogers, Cleavon Little. Group of middle-aged amateur jazz musicians en route to first pro booking. 95m. \$79.95. Karl.

The Gods Must Be Crazy. 1984. Xao, Marius Weyers, Sandra Prinsloo, Jamie Uys. Popular farce from South Africa about tribe disrupted by discovery of empty Coke bottle. Dubbed. 109m. (PG) Hi cc \$79.98. Playhouse.

Going My Way. 1944. B&W. Bing Crosby, Barry Fitzgerald, Gene Lockhart; wr./dir. Leo McCarey. Retiring pastor alarmed by methods of his appointed successor. 126m. LV (3 sides) CX \$39.98. MCA.

In Trouble. 1967. Julie LaChapelle, Katherine Mousseau. Pregnant girl explains herself to brothers by claiming she was raped. 82m. B Hi V \$59.95. New World.

Jo Jo Dancer, Your Life Is Calling. 1986. Richard Pryor, Debbie Allen, Art Evans, Carmen McRae; dir. Pryor. Autobiographical account of successful but self-destructive comic. 97m. (R) Hi St D ss cc \$79.95. RCA/Columbia.

Letter to Brezhnev. 1985. Margi Clarke, Alexandra Pigg, Peter Firth. Liverpool girl falls in love with visiting Russian sailor. 94m. (R) \$79.95. Karl.

Lily in Love. 1985. Christopher Plummer, Maggie Smith, Elke Sommer, Adolph Green. Stage actor poses as younger man to win part in wife's film. 104m. LV \$34.95. Vestron.

Lily Tomlin. 1973. Emmy-winning TV special with guests Alan

Alda, Richard Pryor. 60m. \$39.95. Karl.

The Money Pit. 1986. Tom Hanks, Shelley Long, Alexander Godunov; dir. Richard Benjamin. Slapstick about couple trying to refurbish house. 91m. (PG) LV St ss CX cc \$34.98. MCA.

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Saving Grace. 1986. Tom Conti, Fernando Rey, Giancarlo Giannini. Pope Leo XIV, feeling isolated, visits small village incognito. 112m. (PG) Hi cc \$79.95. LV CX \$34.95. Embassy.

Say Yes. 1986. Jonathan Winters, Art Hindle, Logan Ramsey. Tycoon's grandson stands to inherit fortune if he can land wife in 24 hours. 87m. (PG-13) LV \$29.95. RCA/Columbia.

Sleazemania Vol. 3: The Good, the Bad & the Sleazy. 1986 comp. B&W. Excerpts from exploitation flicks *Dance Hall Racket*, *Tijuana After Midnight*, *Mondo Psycho*, *Smut Peddler Meets Emmanuelle*, more. 60m. \$39.95. Rhino.

Something for Everyone. 1970. Angela Lansbury, Michael York; dir. Harold Prince. Bankrupt countess hires footman, who proceeds to seduce entire family. 112m. (R) Hi \$59.98. Key.

Steven Wright Live. Deadpan comic taped in concert in San Francisco. 54m. Hi \$59.95. Vestron.

Stitches. 1985. Eddie Albert, Parker Stevenson. Contest of

will between med school dean, trio of student pranksters. 92m. (R) \$79.95. Media.

Sweet Liberty. 1986. Alan Alda, Michael Caine, Michelle Pfeiffer; wr./dir. Alda. College prof appalled by efforts to turn his novel on American Revolution into racy teen comedy film. 107m. (PG) Hi D cc \$79.95. MCA.

Transatlantic Merry-Go-Round. 1934. B&W. Jack Benny, Gene Raymond, Patsy Kelly. Benny as star of radio troupe broadcasting from ocean liner. 90m. Price n.a. Late.

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Your Place...Or Mine. 1982. Tyne Daly, Bonnie Franklin, Peter Bonerz, Robert Klein. Matchmaker's efforts to hitch two single friends prove fruitless until day they're accidentally handcuffed together. 93m. \$39.95. U.S.A.

Your Show of Shows Vol. 8. 1986 comp. B&W. Sid Caesar, Imogene Coca, Carl Reiner, Howard Morris. Further highlights from TV program. 66m. \$39.95. Unicorn.



Amos. 1985. Kirk Douglas, Dorothy McGuire, Elizabeth Montgomery, Pat Morita, Ray Walston. New nursing home resident challenges tyrannical head nurse. 95m. Hi \$69.95. Sony.

Amy and the Angel. 1983. Helen Slater, James Earl Jones, Hermione Gingold, Matthew Modine; dir. Ralph Rosenblum. Celestial guardian shows dejected teen girl her importance to lives of others. 45m. cc \$19.95. New World.

At Close Range. 1986. Sean Penn, Christopher Walken, Christopher Penn. Rebellious son meets up with outlaw father. 115m. (R) Hi cc \$79.95. Vestron.

Baby Love. 1969. Ann Lynn. Orphan plots demise of foster family. 98m. (R) Hi \$59.95. Charter ter.

Bedroom Eyes. 1986. Kenneth Gilman, Dayle Haddon. Peeping tom accused of murder. 90m.

Birch Interval. 1978. Eddie Albert, Rip Torn, Ann Wedgeworth. Young girl grows to maturity during stay in Amish town. 104m. (PG) \$69.95. Media.

Celebrity. 1984. Ben Masters, Joseph Bottoms, Michael Beck, James Whitmore, Hal Holbrook, Debbie Allen, Ned Beatty, Claude Akins. TV mini-series about trio of former high school buddies brought to trial over guilty secret they share. 313m. 2 cas. Hi \$69.95. RCA/Columbia.

Cold Eyes of Fear. Fernando Rey. Ex-con arrives at judge's cottage to kill him, unaware the man at home is judge's nephew. 88m. \$59.95. T.W.E.

Death of a Soldier. 1985. James Coburn, Reb Brown. Docu-drama based on case of soldier who murdered 3 Australian women during WWII. 93m. (R) Hi cc \$79.98. Key.

Death Valley Days Vols. 3, 4. 1986 comps. Color/B&W. Episodes of TV western. **Vol. 3:** Mariette Hartley in *The Red Shawl* ('66); George Gobel in *Thar She Blows* ('63), Robert Culp in *Alias James Stewart* ('60). **Vol. 4:** Dabney Coleman, Tom Skerritt in *Ten Day Millionaires* ('68); Ronald Reagan in *The Babe of San Francisco Bay* ('65); Brad Dexter, Carroll O'Connor in *A Gun Is Not a Gentleman* ('62). 76m. ea. Price n.a. Late.

Dersu Uzala. 1975. Maxim Munzik, Yuri Solomine; dir. Akira Kurosawa. Friendship of Soviet explorer and guide. 124m. (G) Hi sub. \$29.95. Embassy.

Desert Hearts. 1985. Helen Shaver, Audra Lindley, Patricia Charbonneau. College professor in Reno to get a divorce finds herself falling in love with another woman. 93m. (R) Hi \$79.95. Vestron.

Erotic Images. 1985. Britt Ekland, Edd Byrnes. Psychology teacher's racy novel makes her millions, but may destroy her marriage. 93m. (R) \$69.95. Vestron.

Gate of Hell. 1953. Kazuo Hasegawa, Machiko Kyo; dir. Teinosuke Kinugasa. Conquering Samurai in love with married woman. 86m. Hi sub. \$29.95. Embassy.

Hail Mary. 1985. Myriem Rousell, Thierry Rode; dir. Jean-Luc Godard. Modern-day Mary somehow conceives immaculately. 107m. \$79.95. Vestron.

Himatsuri (Fire Festival). 1985. Kinya Kitaoji; dir. Mitsuo Yanagimachi. Fable exploring modern Japan's weakening respect for nature. 120m. sub. \$59.95. Karl.

If Ever I See You Again. 1978. Joe Brooks, Shelley Hack. Musician starts new romance with old college flame. 105m. (PG) Hi \$69.95. RCA/Columbia.

Inside the Third Reich. 1982. Rutger Hauer, John Gielgud, Maria Schell, Blythe Danner, Derek Jacobi, Trevor Howard. TV docu-drama based on autobiography of Albert Speer. 240m. (2 cas.) Hi \$79.95. Embassy.

The Jolly Corner. 1977. Salome Jens, Fritz Weaver, Paul Sparer. Adaptation of Henry James tale from Public TV's *American Short Story* series: expatriate American returns. 43m. \$24.95. Monterey.

Killer with Two Faces. 1974. Donna Mills, Ian Hendry. Evil twin terrorizes brother's girlfriend. 70m. Price n.a. Late.

Lifespan. 1975. Klaus Kinski, Hiram Keller, Tina Aumont. Scientist uncovers sinister experiments involving anti-aging drug. 85m. \$69.95. Vestron.

Long Journey Back. 1978. Mike Connors, Stephanie Zimbalist, Cloris Leachman. Girl injured in bus accident faces prospect of life in a wheelchair. 97m. \$39.95. U.S.A.



Desert Hearts

Lucas. 1986. Corey Haim, Kerri Green, Charlie Sheen. Brainy high school misfit develops crush on new girl in town. 100m. (PG-13) Hi St ss cc \$79.98. CBS/Fox.

The Magician of Lublin. 1979. Alan Arkin, Shelley Winters, Valerie Perrine, Louise Fletcher. Adaptation of Isaac Bashevis Singer novel: small-time illusionist gets shot at fame, ca. 1900. 105m. (R) Hi \$79.95. HBO/Cannon.

Murder on the Midnight Express. 1974. Judy Geeson, James Smilie. Espionage leads to murder during overnight train trip. 70m. Price n.a. Late.

92 in the Shade. 1976. Peter Fonda, Burgess Meredith, Warren Oates, Margot Kidder, Harry Dean Stanton. New fishing guide in town clashes with pair of veterans. 91m. (R) Hi St ss \$59.98. Key.

On the Edge. 1986. Bruce Dern, Pam Grier (unrated version only), John Marley, Bill Bailey. Man in mid-forties trains for grueling marathon. 86m. (PG-13), 96m. (unrated) \$79.95 ea. Lightning.

Orpheus. 1949. B&W. Jean Marais; wr./dir. Jean Cocteau. Updated version of legend of Orpheus and Eurydice: poet in love with princess of death. 86m. Hi sub. \$29.95. Embassy.

Parker Adderson, Philosopher/The Music School. 1977. Adaptations of stories by Ambrose Bierce, John Updike. **Adderson:** Confederate general confronts Yankee spy. **Music:** writer's tactic for unwinding. 69m. \$24.95. Monterey.

Pray TV. 1982. John Ritter, Ned Beatty, Richard Kiley, Madelyn

Smith. TV movie about minister who goes to work for corrupt video evangelist. 100m. Hi \$59.95. Charter.

A Question of Guilt. 1978. Tuesday Weld, Ron Leibman, Peter Materson. Promiscuous woman accused of murdering her children. 96m. \$39.95. U.S.A.

The Rules of the Game. 1939. B&W. Marcel Dalio, Nora Gregor, Jean Renoir; wr. Renoir, Carl Koch; dir. Renoir. Acclaimed social satire of French aristocrats gathered for weekend hunt. 110m. Hi sub. \$29.95. Embassy.

Shattered...If Your Kid's on Drugs. 1986. Megan Follows, Earl Holliman, Ricky Segall. Dramatization of two teens' escalating drug use, efforts to end addiction. 59m. Hi D \$24.95. MCA.

A Small Circle of Friends. 1980. Brad Davis, Jameson Parker, Karen Allen. Collegiate menage a trois set in the '60s. 112m. (R) Hi \$59.98. Key.

Stigma. 1972. Philip Michael Thomas, Harlan Cary Poe. Former free spirits slowed down when they contract VD. 93m. (R) \$79.95. Vista.

Street Girls. 1975. Carol Case, Christine Souder. Father attempts to rescue runaway daughter from career as prostitute. 77m. (R) Hi \$59.95. Charter.

Take Your Best Shot. 1982. Robert Urich, Meredith Baxter Birney. Struggling actor's troubled marriage. 96m. \$39.95. U.S.A.

Target. 1985. Gene Hackman, Matt Dillon. Former CIA agent searches Europe for kidnapped

wife with son's help. 117m. (R) LV St ss CX \$34.98. CBS/Fox.

The Trip to Bountiful. 1985. Geraldine Page, John Heard, Garlin Glynn, Rebecca de Mornay; wr. Horton Foote. Southern woman determined to revisit home town before she dies. 105m. (PG) Hi cc \$79.95. LV CX \$34.95. Embassy.

Tropic of Desire. 1979. Matt Collins, Eartha Kitt. Adaptation of Darwin Porter novel *Butterflies in Heat*; stormy love lives of the jet set. \$69.95. Sony.

Umberto D. 1952. B&W. Carlo Battisti; dir. Vittorio de Sica. Elderly Italian struggles to live on meager pension. 89m. Hi sub. \$29.95. Embassy.

Violets Are Blue. 1986. Sissy Spacek, Kevin Kline, Bonnie Bedelia. High school sweethearts reunite years later. 86m. (PG-13) Hi cc \$79.95. RCA/Columbia.

The Witches of Salem. 1972. Account of hysteria that led to 1692 witchcraft trials. 35m. cc \$14.95. New World.

HORROR

Bloodsuckers from Outer Space. 1984. Thom Meyer, Laura Ellis, Pat Paulsen. Alien presence in Texas farm town causes residents to develop unorthodox new thirst. 79m. \$59.95. Karl.

The Comeback. 1978. Jack Jones, Pamela Stephenson. Star singer involved in series of gruesome murders. 100m. \$59.95. Karl.

Crawlspace. 1986. Klaus Kinski, Talia Balsam. Unstable landlord plots demise of female tenants and their boyfriends. 86m. (R) \$79.95. Lightning.

The Crazies. 1973. Lane Carroll, W.G. McMillan, Harold Wayne Jones. Army called in to contain plague virus infecting Pennsylvania hamlet. 103m. \$79.95. Vista.

Demons. 1985. Dir. Lamberto Bava. Life imitates art during screening of slasher flick at crowded theatre. 89m. (R) B Hi V \$79.95. New World.

Dracula: The Great Undead. 1985. Nar. Vincent Price. Documentary on vampire legends, movie depictions. 60m. \$39.95. Active.

Fangoria's Weekend of Horrors. 1986. Look at November '85 horror buff convention. Appearances by Rick Baker, Elvira, Wes Craven, Tobe Hooper, film clips, more. 60m. \$59.95. Media.

Frankenstein. 1931. Boris Karloff, Colin Clive, Mae Clarke; dir. James Whale. Restored version of classic about scientist's doomed attempt to create life. Includes orig. trailer, collection of still photos, repeat of key scenes in single-frame mode. 71m. LV (side 2 CAV) CX \$29.98. MCA.

The Invasion of Carol Enders. 1974. Meredith Baxter Birney, Christopher Connelly, Charles Aidman. Woman attacked by prowler recovers, but takes on personality of dead friend. 72m. \$29.95. Thriller.

Invitation to Hell. 1984. Robert Urich, Joanna Cassidy, Susan

Lucci; dir. Wes Craven. Health club's female director possessed by Devil. 96m. Hi \$79.95. Sony.

Mark of the Devil. 1972. Herbert Lom, Olivera Vuco, Udo Kier. Austrian peasant convinced all beautiful women are witches sets out to rid world of them. 96m. (R) \$69.95. Lightning.

The Masks of Death. 1984. Peter Cushing, John Mills, Anne Baxter, Ray Milland. Sherlock Holmes outing: series of corpses found, all without visible cause of death. 80m. \$59.95. Karl.

Natas...The Reflection. 1983. Randy Mulkey, Pat Bolt, Craig Hensley; introduction and commentary by Elvira. TV reporter determined to capture vision of Devil's sentry on tape. 90m. (PG) \$29.95. Thriller.

Night of the Living Dead. 1968; colorized 1986. Duane Jones, Judith O'Dea; dir. George Romero. Corpses rise to eat the living. 96m. \$29.95. Roach.

Nightstalker. 1979. Aldo Ray. Two 12,000-year-old living corpses can rest only if they find soul of virgin to sacrifice. 90m. \$39.95. Thriller.

Poltergeist II: The Other Side. 1986. JoBeth Williams, Craig T. Nelson, Heather O'Rourke, Julian Beck, Geraldine Fitzgerald. Freeing family once again beset by angry spirits. 91m. (PG-13) Hi St ss D \$79.95. MGM/UA.

Revolt of the Zombies. 1936. B&W. Dorothy Stone, Dean Jagger. Undead soldiers balk at foul biddings of man who resurrected them. 65m. \$14.95. Roach.

Scream for Help. 1986. Rachael Kelly, David Brooks. Made-for-video slasher flick. 95m. (R) \$79.95. Karl.

Torment. 1985. Taylor Gilbert, William Witt. Detective discovers future father-in-law is responsible for series of recent murders. 85m. (R) B Hi V \$69.95. New World.

The Toxic Avenger. 1985. Mitchell Cohen, Andree Maranda. Wimp lands in barrel of chemical waste, emerges as powerful but benevolent monster. 100m. (R) \$79.95. Lightning.

White Zombie. 1932. B&W. Bela Lugosi, Madge Bellamy. Walking

dead enlisted to labor in sugar mill. 62m. \$14.95. Roach.

How to

Black Belt Vols. 1, 2. 1986. *Tai Chi Chuan*: lessons in self-defense by Marshall Ho'o. *Karate*: Fumio Demura demonstrates basic techniques in 3 workouts. 90m. ea. \$29.95 ea. (including instructional book). Karl.

Callanetics. 1986. Callan Pinckney demonstrates exercise program outlined in her best-selling book. 60m. Hi St \$24.95. MCA.

Cheers! Entertaining with Esquire. 1986. Advice from "party consultant" on bar setup, dinner menus, etiquette, more. With booklet of recipes, checklist. 40m. V only \$14.95. Esquire.

Consumer Reports Vols. 3, 4. 1986. *Houses and Condos*: chaps. on ownership vs. rental, inspection, choosing location. *Traveling*: choosing travel agent, car rental tips, more. 60m. ea. \$19.95 ea. Karl.

How to (Really) Start Your Own Business. 1986. Counsel from business consultants, owners of David's Cookies, Pizza Hut, Celestial Seasonings, others. 90m. \$29.95. Karl.

How to Beat a Speeding Ticket. 1986. Guide to preparing competent court case. 30m. \$14.95. Active.

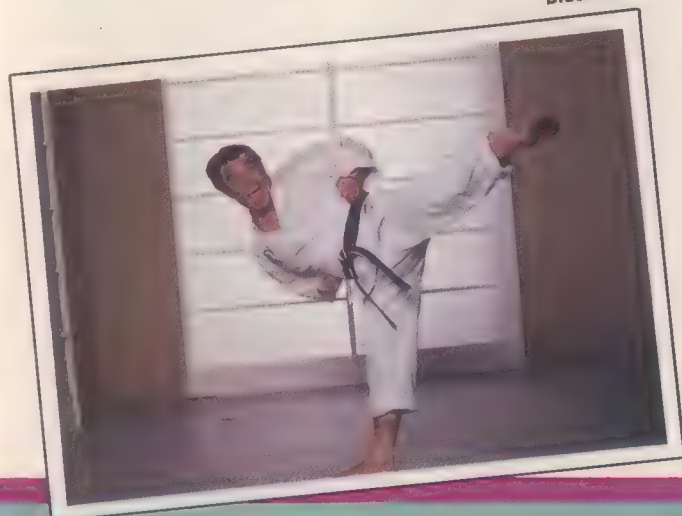
Jane Fonda's Low Impact Aerobic Workout. 1986. Modified version of best-selling exercise tape. 50m. Hi St \$39.95. Karl.

Professor Greenthumb's Guide to Good Gardening. 1986. Tips on seeding, watering, pruning, more from British horticulturalist John Lenanton. 60m. \$14.95. Karl.

Richard Simmons and the Silver Foxes. 1986. Simmons leads exercises tailored for those over 50, with help of celeb parents Jacqueline Stallone, Sal Pacino, Pauline Fawcett, others. \$24.95. Karl.

The Road to Achievement: Up the Corporate Ladder. 1986. Jim Mackrell, host. Panel of career

Black Belt



advisors offer advice on negotiating salary, handling office politics, switching jobs, more. 60m. \$19.95. Karl.

The Road to Achievement: Winning Entrepreneurial Style. 1986. Financial reporter Tom Miller hosts program profiling top businessmen and -women. 60m. \$19.95 ea. Karl.

Touche Ross Video Tax Guide 1987. 1986. Program prepared by top accounting firm explaining new tax reform law, new 1040 format. B/V/LV (CAV, CX) \$29.95. MasterVision.

Yardening Vols. 1, 2. 1986. Jeff Ball hosts initial entries in 12-cas. series on home gardening: *How to Design and Build a Vegetable Garden*, *How to Grow and Nurture Seeds and Seedlings*. 60m. ea. \$17.95 ea. Kartes.



AC/DC: Who Made Who? 1986 comp. Videos of title track, "Maximum Overdrive," "You Shook Me All Night Long," more. 24m. V only. Hi St D \$19.98. Atlantic.

Actor. 1978. Herschel Bernardi, Georgia Brown, Harold Gould. TV musical based on life of Paul Muni. 105m. \$39.95. U.S.A.

Billy Joel—The Video Album, Vol. 2



Amahl and the Night Visitors. 1978. Teresa Stratas, Giorgio Tozzi, Willard White. Production of Gian Carlo Menotti opera. 52m. Hi \$39.95. VAI.

Billy Joel—The Video Album, Vol. 2. 1986 comp. "Baby Grand," "Still Rock and Roll," "Allentown," "You May Be Right," 6 more. 50m. Hi St \$19.98. CBS/Fox.

The Blow Monkeys—Digging Your Video. 1986. British band's four videos, including "Wicked Ways," "Digging Your Scene," 18m. Hi St D \$14.95. MusicVision.

Chicago 17. 1986. Combination CD/LV contains entire album plus videos "You're the Inspiration," "Hard Habit to Break." St CX \$16.95. Pioneer.

Color Me Barbra. 1966. Barbra Streisand. CBS-TV special with musical sequences built around visit to the Philadelphia museum. New intro by Streisand. 60m. Hi \$29.98. CBS/Fox.

The Coltrane Legacy. 1986. Tribute to saxophonist John Coltrane: interviews, performance clips, appearances by Eric Dolphy, McCoy Tyner, Reggie Workman, others. 60m. \$39.95. VAI.

Dream Academy. 1986. Combination CD/LV contains whole album plus videos "Life in a Northern Town," "The Love Parade." St CX \$16.95. Pioneer.

Elton John: Breaking Hearts Tour. 1986. Concert highlights; includes "Rocket Man," "Daniel," "Benny and the Jets." 54m. LV St \$29.95. Vestron.

Elvis Memories. 1986. Color/B&W. Video tribute with clips from '56 concert in Memphis, '68 "comeback" TV show, many more; interviews, home movies, Cybill Shepherd, Barbara Mandrell, Merle Haggard. 48m. \$29.95. MusicVideo.

Elvis: The Echo Will Never Die. 1986. Tribute to Presley hosted by Casey Kasem. Includes extensive footage of the King, commentary by Tom Jones, B.B. King, Sammy Davis Jr., Ursula Andress, Dave Marsh. 50m. \$29.95. MPI.

The Fabulous Thunderbirds—Live from London. 1986. Texas foursome rip through "Tuff Enuff," "She's Tough," "Pretty Baby," 12 more. 60m. Hi St \$29.95. MusicVision.

Gil Scott-Heron's Black Wax. 1986. Recording of birthday concert. "Johannesburg," "B Movie," "Winter in America," more. 80m. Hi St \$29.95. Sony.

Gilbert and Sullivan Present Their Greatest Hits. 1986. Selections from *Pirates of Penzance*, *H.M.S. Pinafore*, *The Mikado*, 2 others, performed by England's D'Oyly Carte opera company and 1,000-voice choir. 54m. Hi \$29.95. MusicVideo.

Guitar Men. 1986. Performances featuring John Martyn, Snowy White (Thin Lizzy), Steve Marriott, Alvin Lee. 50m. Hi St \$19.95. Sony.

Horowitz in Moscow. 1986. Historic '86 concert by pianist Vladimir Horowitz, his first appearance in U.S.S.R. since defecting in 1925. Includes encore not shown on TV. 120m. Hi St D \$39.95. MGM/UA.

Janet Jackson: Control—The Videos. 1986 comp. "Nasty," "What Have You Done for Me Lately," "When I Think of You." 20m. Hi St \$12.95. A&M.

Kerrang! Metal Monsters. 1986 comp. Videos by Iron Maiden, Whitesnake, W.A.S.P., Helix, others. 60m. Hi St \$29.95. Sony.

Keystone. 1986. Original stage production paying tribute to

Mack Sennett's famed film studio, incorporating skits, songs, original movie footage. 90m. Hi \$59.95. Sony.

The Magic Flute. 1973. Josef Kostlinger, Ulric Cold, Irma Urrila; dir. Ingmar Bergman. Film version of Mozart opera; produced for Swedish TV. (G) LV St sub. CX \$39.95. Paramount.

The Manhattan Transfer: Vocalese Live 1986. 1986. Tokyo concert; includes "Four Brothers," "Gloria," "Boy from New York City." 80m. V only. Hi St D \$24.98. Atlantic.

Metal Mania. 1986 comp. Selections by early heavy metal groups Nazareth, UFO, Uriah Heep. 50m. Hi St \$19.95. Sony.

The Monkees in "Here Come the Monkees," "I Was a Teenage Monster." 1967. Episodes from the TV series; songs include "I Wanna Be Free," "Let's Dance On," "Your Auntie Grizelda." 50m. \$29.95. MusicVision.

The Monkees in "Monkees a la Carte," "Prince and the Pauper." 1967. Episodes from the TV series; songs include "Stepping Stone," "She," "Mary, Mary." 50m. \$29.95. MusicVision.

Mr. Mister—Welcome to the Real World. 1986. Combination CD/LV contains complete album plus videos "Kyrie," "Broken Wings." St CX \$16.95. Pioneer.

MTV Closet Classics. 1986 comp. Jimi Hendrix, the Who, Beach Boys, T. Rex, Cream, Ike & Tina Turner, Grateful Dead, others in 15 old TV clips. 60m. LV St \$29.95. Vestron.

My Name Is Barbra. 1965. B&W. Barbra Streisand. Acclaimed CBS-TV special. 23 songs, including "People," "My Man," *Funny Girl* medley. 60m. Hi \$29.98. CBS/Fox.

The New Born King. 1985. Selection of Christmas hymns and carols performed in London's Westminster Cathedral by Benjamin Luxon, Aled Jones, organist James O'Donnell, choir. 60m. Hi St \$39.95. VAI.

Nightsongs. 1968. New York City images set to Duke Ellington classics performed by saxophonist Toshiyuki Honda. LV only St CX \$29.95. Pioneer.

The Nutcracker, A Fantasy on Ice. 1983. Nar. Lorne Greene. TV special featuring Dorothy Hamill in adaptation of Tchaikovsky's ballet. 85m. Hi St \$69.95. Vidmark.

The Police: Every Breath You Take—The Videos. 1986 comp. Includes "Roxanne," "So Lonely," "Don't Stand So Close to Me," more. 60m. Hi St \$19.95. A&M.

Punk Special. 1986 comp. Videos by King Kurt, Lords of the New Church, Husker Du. 50m. Hi St \$19.95. Sony.

Sherrill Milnes: An All-Star Gala. 1985. Burt Lancaster hosts concert featuring baritone Milnes, Plácido Domingo, and others; selections from *La Traviata*, *I Pagliacci*, *Così fan Tutte*, more. 56m. Hi St \$49.95. VAI.

The Silver/Black Attack. 1986. L.A. Raiders in rap video, plus interviews with players, coach Tom Flores. 30m. \$19.95. MPI.

Soul to Soul. 1986. Concert recorded in Ghana in 1971, with performances by Ike & Tina Turner, Wilson Pickett, Santana, Roberta Flack, Staple Singers. 29m. V only. Hi St D \$24.98. Atlantic.

South Pacific, The London Sessions. 1986. Documentary of a recording: score of Rodgers & Hammerstein musical as performed by Jose Carreras, Kiri Te Kanawa, Mandy Patinkin, Sarah Vaughan, others. Includes interviews, excerpts. 60m. Hi St \$19.98. CBS/Fox.

Starship—Knee Deep in the Hoopla. 1986. Combination CD/LV featuring complete album plus videos "We Built This City," "Sara," "Desperate Heart," "Hearts of the World." St CX \$16.95. Pioneer.

Stuttgart Ballet—The Miracle Lives. 1986. German dance troupe in scenes from Kylian's *Forgotten Land*, Cranko's *Romeo and Juliet*, Bejart's *Isadora*, more. 60m. Hi \$69.95. Sony.

That's Singing. 1986. Tribute to American musical theatre starring veteran Broadway performers. 120m. \$59.95. Karl.

Treemonisha. 1981. Production of Scott Joplin's sole opera: educated daughter of former slaves

challenges her people's superstitions. 92m. Hi St \$79.95. Sony.

The Trumpet Kings. 1986 comp. Wynton Marsalis hosts look at century's great trumpeters. Clips of Louis Armstrong, Dizzy Gillespie, Bunny Berigan, Roy Eldridge, many others. 60m. \$39.95. VAI.

Under the Cherry Moon. 1986. B&W/Color. Prince, Jerome Benton, Francesca Annis; dir. Prince. Musician visiting the Riviera falls for spoiled heiress, but still loves himself best. 100m. (PG-13) Hi St ss cc \$79.95. LV St ss CX cc \$34.98. Also Spanish sub. version, *Bajo la Luz de la Luna*. Warner.

Video Aid. 1985 comp. Program aimed at funding Ethiopian famine relief. Messages from David Bowie, Mick Jagger, Bob Geldof, Boy George; videos by Wham!, Duran Duran, Peter Dinklage, Eurythmics. 90m. Hi St \$29.95. Sony.

Waylon Jennings—America. 1986 comp. Reminiscences by country star frame videos of title tune, "The Conversation," 5 others. Cameos by Johnny Cash, Jessi Colter, Robert Duvall. 30m. Hi St D \$19.95. MusicVision.

Women in Rock. 1986 comp. Concert clips featuring the Cocomamas, Judy Tzuke, Lee Aaron, Carlene Carter, others. 50m. Hi St \$19.95. Sony.

Daleks Invasion Earth 2150 A.D.. 1966. Peter Cushing, Bernard Cribbins, Ray Brooks. Feature film based on *Dr. Who* TV series: conquering robots foiled. 81m. Hi \$79.95. HBO/Cannon.

Invaders from Mars. 1986. Karen Black, Louise Fletcher, Bud Cort; dir. Tobe Hooper. Title creatures turn young boy's teacher into zombie; he's next. 102m. (PG) Hi St D ss cc \$79.95. Media.

The Quiet Earth. 1985. Bruno Lawrence, Alison Routledge, Peter Smith. Experiment causes rent in universe that could wipe out human race. 91m. (R) Hi St ss cc \$79.98. CBS/Fox.

SPORTS

The Best of Women's Championship Wrestling, Vol. 2. 1986. Matches featuring the Daughters of Darkness, Lady Satan, Princess Jasmine, others. 60m. \$19.95. Gems.

Disposable Heroes—the Blood, Guts and Tears Side of Football. 1985. O.J. Simpson, John Madden, Jim Otto, Roger Staubach. Look at brevity and strain of average pro football career. 60m. \$29.95. Active.

Jim McMahon: No Guts, No Glory. 1986. Wit and wisdom of Chicago Bears quarterback. 60m. \$29.95. MPI.

Monsters of the Mat Vols. 6, 7. 1986 comps. Wrestling highlights hosted by Sgt. Slaughter. 60m. ea. \$39.95 ea. Sports.

16 Days of Glory. 1986. Documentary of 1984 Summer Olympics. 145m. (G) LV St CX cc \$39.95. Paramount.

Tackling Football: A Woman's Guide to Watching the Game. 1986. Chicago Bears' Tim Wrightman and comic Tom Dreesen explain it all. 45m. \$24.95. MPI.

Warren Miller's Learn to Ski Better. 1986. Tips from experts for all ability levels. 90m. Hi St \$24.95. Karl.

VERITÉ

Crusade in the Pacific Vols. 1-6. B&W. Documentary series detailing military, political history of the Far East, 1931-1951, with extensive newsreel footage. *From Passive Existence to All Out War—The Pacific, Independence and War, The Pacific in Transition, Turning the Tide, MacArthur, the Battle of Iwo Jima and the A-Bomb, Japan Surrenders.* Vol. 1, 90m.; 2, 4, 6, 130m. ea.; 3, 5, 115m. ea. \$24.95 ea. Embassy.

Dolphin Adventure. 1979. Documentary following band of dolphin enthusiasts on study voyage. 58m. \$59.95. Lightning.

Footsteps of Giants. 1986. Made-for-video look at past history and future direction of U.S. manned space flight program. 60m. Hi \$29.95. Pacific.

The Immigrant Experience: The Long, Long Journey. 1972. Wr./dir. Joan Micklin Silver. Family's entry into U.S. at turn of century, as seen through eyes of young boy. 30m. cc \$14.95. New World.

The Indomitable Teddy Roosevelt. 1983. Color/B&W. Bob Boyd; nar. George C. Scott. Biographical portrait mixing archive footage with re-enactments. 94m. Hi St \$79.95. Prism.

16 Days of Glory



Journey to Adventure with Gunther Less: The Orient, The Pacific, The USA. 1986. Travelogues; 3 sep. cas. 89m., 83m., 60m. \$29.95 ea. Independent.

The Lions of Capitalism: Great American Millionaires. 1977. B&W. Nar. Orson Welles, Lowell Thomas, Robert MacNeil. Profiles of industrialists J.P. Morgan, Andrew Carnegie, Henry Ford, Ray Kroc. 55m. cc \$19.95. New World.

McCarthy, Death of a Witch Hunter. 1986. B&W. Dir. Emile de

Antonio. Account of Senator Joseph McCarthy's celebrated career, with extensive excerpts from '54 Army hearings. 50m. \$29.95. MPI.

National Geographic. 1986. *Atocha: Quest for treasure, Save the Panda, African Wildlife.* 60m. ea. LV cc \$29.95 ea. Vestron.

The Plot to Kill JFK. 1986. B&W. Dir. Emile de Antonio. Examination of lawyer Mark Lane's theories on President's assassination. 50m. \$29.95. MPI.

Scared Straight. 1978. Peter Falk, host. Made-for-TV documentary about program to curb juvenile crime by having inmates describe horrors of prison life to young offenders. 54m. \$59.95. Lightning.

Showbiz Ballyhoo. 1982. Color/B&W. David Brenner hosts look at Hollywood's star system; footage of lavish movie premieres, screen tests by Bette Davis, Frank Sinatra, Errol Flynn, Clark Gable, Shirley Temple, many others. 76m. Price n.a. Late.

Showbiz Goes to War. 1982. Color/B&W. Made-for-cable documentary featuring clips of Humphrey Bogart, Judy Garland, Frank Sinatra, Al Jolson, many others. 90m. Price n.a. Late.

The Titanic. 1986. Documentary on expedition to discover wreckage; history of ship's construction, interviews with surviving passengers. 60m. Hi cc \$29.95. Vestron.

Venice Beach Confidential. 1986. Resident eccentrics of Calif. town. 60m. \$29.95. Rhino.

PROGRAMMING SOURCES

AH Video Sales, 430 W. 54 St., New York, N.Y. 10019 (212-489-8130).

A&M Video, 1416 N. La Brea Ave., Hollywood, Calif. 90028 (213-469-2411).

Active Home Video, 211 S. Beverly Dr., Beverly Hills, Calif. 90212 (213-850-1757).

Atlantic Video, 75 Rockefeller Plaza, New York, N.Y. 10017 (212-484-6000).

CBS/Fox Video, 1211 Ave. of the Americas, New York, N.Y. 10036 (212-819-3200).

Charter: see **Embassy.**

Children's Video Library: see **Vestron.**

Continental Video, 2320 Cotner, Los Angeles, Calif. 90064 (800-821-3427, 213-477-8055).

Embassy Home Entertainment, 1901 Ave. of the Stars, Los Angeles, Calif. 90067 (213-553-3600).

Esquire Video, 2 Park Ave., New York, N.Y. 10016 (212-561-8226).

Family Home Entertainment: see **IVE.**

Video Gems, 731 N. LaBrea Ave., Box 38188, Los Angeles, Calif. 90038 (213-938-2385).

HBO/Cannon Home Video, 1370 Sixth Ave., New York, N.Y. 10019 (212-977-8990).

Image Entertainment, 6311 Romaine St., Hollywood, Calif. 90038 (213-468-8867, 800-421-4585).

Independent United Distributors: see **A&H.**

IVE, 21800 Burbank Blvd. #300, Box 4062, Woodland Hills, Calif. 91365-4062 (818-888-3040, 800-423-7455).

Karl-Lorimar Home Video, 17942 Cowan Ave., Irvine, Calif. 92714 (714-474-0355).

Kartes Video Communications, 7225 Woodland Dr., Indianapolis, Ind. 46278 (800-331-1387).

Key Video: see **CBS/Fox.**

The Video Late Show: see **IVE.**

Lightning Video: see **Vestron.**

Magic Window Video: see **RCA/Columbia.**

MasterVision, 969 Park Ave., New York, N.Y. 10028 (212-879-0448).

MCA Home Video, 70 Universal City Plaza, Universal City, Calif. 91608 (818-508-4315).

Media Home Entertainment, 5730 Buckingham Pkwy., Culver City, Calif. 90230 (213-216-7900, 800-421-4509).

MGM/UA Home Video, 1350 Ave. of the Americas, New York, N.Y. 10019 (212-408-0600).

Monterey Home Video: see **IVE.**

MPI Home Video, 15825 Rob Roy Dr., Oak Forest, Ill. 60452 (312-687-7881).

Vestron MusicVideo: see **Vestron.**

MusicVision: see **RCA/Columbia.**

New World Video, 1440 S. Sepulveda Blvd., Los Angeles, Calif. 90025 (213-444-8100).

Pacific Arts Video, 50 N. La Cienega Blvd., Suite 210, Beverly Hills, Calif. 90211 (213-657-2233).

Paramount Home Video, 5555 Melrose Ave., Los Angeles, Calif. 90038-3197 (213-468-5000).

Pioneer Artists, 200 W. Grand Ave., Montvale, N.J. 07645 (201-573-1122).

Playhouse Video: see **CBS/Fox.**

Prism Entertainment, 1875 Century Pk. East, Suite 1010, Los Angeles, Calif. 90067 (213-277-3270).

Random House Home Video, 201 E. 50 St., New York, N.Y. 10022 (212-355-5049).

RCA/Columbia Pictures Home Video, 2901 W. Alameda Ave., Burbank, Calif. 91505 (818-906-1722, 818-954-4950).

Rhino Video, 1201 Olympic Blvd., Santa Monica, Calif. 90404 (213-450-6323).

Hal Roach Studio Films Classics,

1600 N. Fairfax, Hollywood, Calif. 90046 (213-850-0525).

Silvermine Video, 6914 Canby St., Suite 110, Reseda, Calif. 91335 (818-342-2880).

Sony Video Software, 9 W. 57th St., New York, N.Y. 10019 (212-371-5800, 800-847-4164).

U.S.A. Sports Video: see **IVE.**

Thriller Video: see **IVE.**

Trans World Entertainment, 6464 Sunset Blvd., Los Angeles, Calif. 90028 (213-461-0467).

Unicorn Video, 20822 Dearborn St., Chatsworth, Calif. 91311 (818-407-1333).

United Entertainment, 4111 South Darlington, Tulsa, Oklahoma 74135 (800-331-4077).

U.S.A. Home Video: see **IVE.**

Video Arts International, Box 153, Ansonia Station, New York, N.Y. 10023 (212-799-7798).

Vestron Video, 60 Long Ridge Rd., Stamford, Conn. 06907 (203-968-0000).

Vidmark Entertainment, 2450 Wilshire Blvd., Santa Monica, Calif. 90403 (213-829-4359).

Vista Home Video, 645 Madison Ave., New York, N.Y. 10022 (212-486-7272).

Warner Home Video, 4000 Warner Blvd., Burbank, Calif. 91522 (818-954-6000).

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BERGER-BRAITHWAITE V I D E O T E S T S

January 1987

Zenith VR3300 HQ VHS Hi-Fi Side-Loading VCR with MTS

Sony CCD-V3 Auto Handycam Camcorder

Toshiba DX-7 VHS VCR with Digital Effects

NEC HQ VHS VCR with Digital Effects

Zenith Side-Loading VHS VCR with MTS



Table model VCRs have been about the same size and shape—wider than deep and about five inches high—since they first appeared ten years ago. Part

of the reason for their shape was the way the cassette fit in the machine, with the wider edge toward the front. Now Zenith has a full-featured table model about the size of a videocassette player. The VR3300 is less than 14 inches wide, and nicknamed the "Midi." Its size is achieved by turning the tape transport sideways inside the VCR and inserting the cassette with what was formerly the right end facing forward.

Amazingly, Zenith has managed to include almost all the features of the larger VR4100 and a few new conveniences. Chief among the latter is "music scan" which operates in conjunction with "record mute." Muting is used to record a five-second silence on the linear track. You can seek out blank cues by pressing a single digit before pressing rewind or fast forward. Music scan then counts the blank spaces on the linear track until the pressed number switches the VCR into play. "Scan" and the number appear on the display. Such a scheme has been used on audio cassette recorders.

Another useful feature is the "go to" function, which directly accesses any point on the tape. A third new feature takes "auto power on" when you insert a cassette one step further. If the machine is off and you insert a cassette without the safety tab, the VCR automatically starts to play. To view a prerecorded tape, just turn on the TV to display a tape and insert a cassette. The tape turns on the machine,

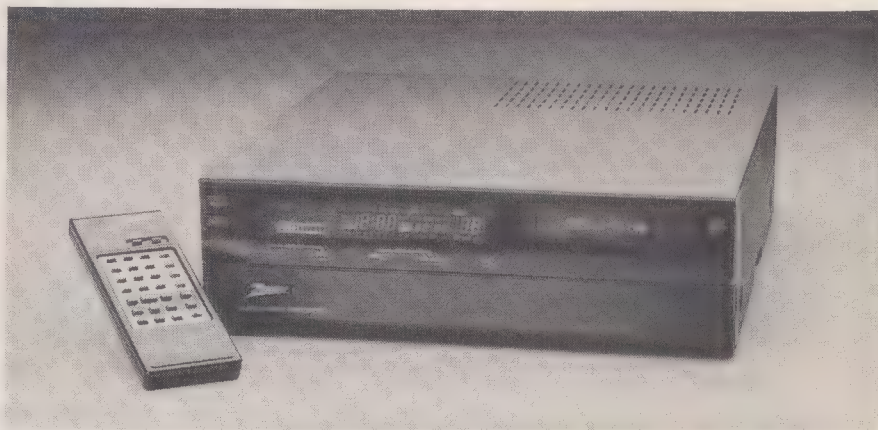
starts to play, and appears on the screen.

Other features include MTS and SAP recording, all four HQ circuits, an edit switch for higher quality dubs, full function remote (the real control panel), auto rewind, audio only recording, special playback effects except at LP, still pictures, and 1/5x slow motion. The few features we miss from Zenith's VR4100 are the multi-speed, forward/reverse play (without sound), a stereo linear track with Dolby noise reduction, separate access to left and right audio tracks, and T-160 time remaining indication.

Description. Weighing just 17 pounds, the Midi is approximately 4-1/4 inches high by 13-1/2 inches wide by 14-7/8 inches deep. Its narrowed width is complemented by a black high-tech look with discreet touches of silver. Even the clock digits look silverish rather than the blue, green, or red of more traditional displays.

Also remarkable is its apparent lack of controls. There are only three on the front panel: power, eject, and instant record. The remainder of the front panel is occupied by a small cassette hatch wide enough only for the narrow edge of a cassette, and a large display area with LED indicators for tape output, audio out (Hi-Fi, normal, or both), and audio input (stereo, SAP present, and SAP recording on linear track).

Zenith Side-Loading VHS VCR with MTS



The lower half of the panel is a flip-down compartment cover. Most of the remaining controls are on the inside of the door or on the compartment's back wall. Zenith justifies the arrangement by pointing out that most users operate their machine by remote control and consider the controls on the VCR as secondary.

Those on the inside of the door are membrane touch pads divided into two main groups. At the left are those for tuning, setting the clock and programing the eight-event/two-week timer. Most of the touch pads have second functions. In that group are the pads for onscreen display, SP/EP, and the calendar and clock digits, enter, channel up/down, and others.

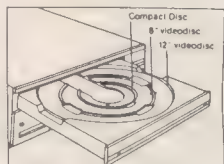
The touch pads at the right are mostly associated with transport control. In that group are tape/TV, go to, audio dub, record, pause, play, clock/count/[time]remain, counter reset, record mute, rewind and search, fast forward and search, and stop. The compartment wall has mini jacks for left, right, and stereo headphones, twin sliders for manually adjusting the Hi-Fi record level, and rotary controls for picture sharpness, headphone level, and normal and slow tracking.

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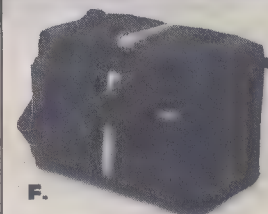
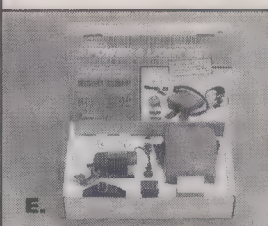
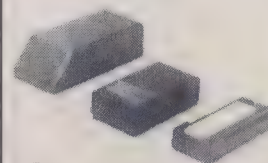
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Test Report:
Zenith VR3300 Hi-Fi VHS "Midi" VCR
with MTS Stereo

DATA

Date of test: October 1986
Suggested retail price: \$999
Weight: 17 pounds
Dimensions: 4-3/16 x 13-7/16 x 14-13/16 inches (h x w x d)
Power requirements: 120 VAC, 60 Hz
Power consumption: 38 W
Tape format: HQ VHS
Tape speeds: SP and EP (SLP), record; SP, LP (no special effects), and SLP, playback
Play speed select: automatic
Still frame: yes
Frame advance: no
Slow motion: 1/5x, hold down pause for more than 2 secs
Speed play: no
Rapid search: see Cue & review
Cue & review: 7x
Fast forward/rewind time: 3.5 min. for T-120
Visible FF and Rew: no
Remote pause: yes
Remote: IR wireless with buttons for 10-digit keypad, channel up/down, enter (recall), repeat in program mode, (source), AM/PM, SP/EP, volume, rewind/search, play, fast forward/search, stop, program, record, program cancel,

pause/still (flashback), TV/tape (mute), audio out, and record mute (Zenith-TV channel up/down), plus a switch for VCR/Zenith TV command output)

Separate eject: yes

Counter digits: 4-digit counter switchable to time remaining

Counter memory: yes

Program start locator/index/cue: go to selectable counter number, and music scan (looks for blanks longer than four seconds on linear audio track)

Audio dub: yes

Video dub: no

Auto rewind: yes

Linear audio: mono

Hi-Fi audio: stereo

Tuning method: quartz frequency synthesis

Channel selectors: programmable scan and direct access on VCR and remote

Preset method: skip/cancel from scan sequence

Broadcast tuning range: 2 to 13, 14 to 69

Cable tuning range: 122 channels—2 to 13, A-8, A-2, A-1, A to W, AA to ZZ, AAA

AFT: always on

Channel lock: yes

Timer: 8 programs, 14 days

Accessories: remote control with battery, audio cable, antenna cable, antenna splitter, antenna mixer, and video operating guide on cassette

RESULTS & RATINGS

Horizontal resolution: 240 lines
S/N, video luminance (SP/EP): rated—43 dB; measured—44.8/46.4 dB, un-weighted; 54.3/52.2 dB, weighted
S/N, chroma AM (SP/EP): measured—48.5/53.1 dB
S/N, chroma PM (SP/EP): measured—42.6/39.8 dB
Audio frequency response: rated—20-20,000 Hz, Hi-Fi; 100-10,000 Hz, linear; measured—20-20,000 Hz, +0.7/-1.8 dB, Hi-Fi; 100-12,000 Hz, +1/-3 dB, SP; 80-6300 Hz, +2.4/-3 dB, EP, linear
S/N, linear audio: rated—more than 40 dB; measured—43 dB
Dynamic range, Hi-Fi: rated—more than 80 dB; measured—81.5 dB
Audio distortion, measured: 0.4 percent, Hi-Fi; 1.8 percent, linear
Overall picture quality: excellent by HQ VHS standards
Audio quality: excellent
Ease of operation: very good/excellent
Overall performance: excellent

slide switches for TV/CATV/HRC, level/off/Hi-Fi tracking, AFC normal/special, source select tuner/simulcast/aux, and counter memory on/off.

The top, bottom, and sides are bare but for the ventilation holes. The rear panel is simply laid out with the AC cord, an unswitched AC outlet, a jack field, the chan-

nel 3/4 RF selector, and the VHS equivalent of the edit switch on Beta machines, labelled dub mode here. It lessens the generation loss when making dubs.

The jacks are the familiar RCA type for stereo audio and video input and output, plus an F-type for RF in and out. The single RF in connector is used for either cable

input or VHF and UHF combined. The RF output also combines VHF and UHF signals. A combiner and a splitter for the RF signals are supplied.

The remote control resembles those of other recent Zenith VCRs. It is black with two depressions. A red power button and audio input selection are in the smaller

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
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
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one. In the larger depression is a ten-digit keypad with the first 7 buttons doubling for weekdays and clock and timer settings. Eight, nine, and zero double for the second week, daily, and repeat controls. Other buttons are for enter/recall, source, channel up and down, and volume up and down.

Nearer the operator are buttons for rewind, play, fast forward, stop, pause, flashback to last channel, record, program, and program cancel. Nearest the user are

buttons for TV/tape, audio out, record mute, and a VCR/TV selector switch that determines whether the remote will signal the VCR or those Zenith TVs with which the remote is compatible. Functions like volume, flashback, mute, and the TV channel commands are for matching TVs.

Operation. Zenith intends the remote control to be the primary controller, so let's start there. Zenith uses a neat trick to accustom you to the VCR. It puts the basic instructions on a supplied videotape. An

abbreviated instruction card and a full instruction manual back up the tape on the premise that most users read the manual when all else fails. A sheet with big pictures shows you how to make the basic TV hook-up so you can watch the instructions.

It's possible you may never have to touch a button on the VCR after setup. Even the timer can be set from the remote with onscreen readouts to guide you. You're likely to need the controls on the VCR to adjust the tracking, sharpness, headphone volume, the manual Hi-Fi record level, and for the occasional simulcast or dub. That's not bad.


With its new and useful width, the Midi may start a trend.

We would have preferred the edit switch on the front instead of the rear panel but Zenith figured you would be back there making connections anyway. We leave our VCR always connected for editing. That, the mono linear track, and the lack of multi-speed play make us rate the ease of operation as very good/excellent. (What can we say? We're spoiled.) However, a four-inch saving in VCR width is a big plus, and the Midi fits well with the audio gear.

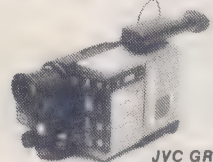
Performance. The VR3300 equals the earlier model, and may be a smidgen better on picture quality. Its horizontal resolution is 240+ lines with a video signal-to-noise ratio of 44.8 decibels at SP and 46.4 dB at EP, unweighted. The chroma AM S/N ratio is 48.5 dB at SP and 53.1 dB at EP. The chroma PM S/N is 42.6 dB at SP and 39.8 dB at EP. That's excellent compared to HQ VHS VCRs.

Similar high quality was measured on audio with a 20 to 20,000 Hertz frequency response flat within +0.7/-1.8 dB on the Hi-Fi tracks and 100 to 12,000 Hz +1/-3 dB on the linear track at SP speed. Dynamic range on the Hi-Fi track was 81.5 dB, about 2.5 dB below the best we've measured. Compared to anything other than compact discs and a few Hi-Fi VCRs, it is outstanding. The S/N ratio was 43 dB with a total harmonic distortion (THD) of 1.8 percent on the mono linear audio track. THD on the Hi-Fi track was 0.4 percent. That, too, is excellent performance.

The picture and sound quality are excellent. Ease of operation is rated very good/excellent only because it lacks a few fancy features, like multi-speed play. The 13-1/2-inch width is new and useful, so the Midi may start a trend. The VR3300 has a suggested retail price of \$999. In our book, it's a steal considering its excellent performance.



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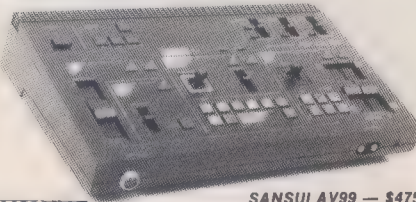
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





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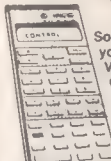
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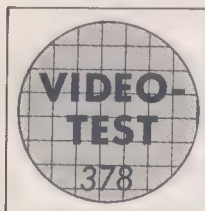
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Sony Auto Handycam Camcorder



tory and cassette. It had three shooting

A year ago Sony introduced the CCD-M8U 8mm Handycam, a bare-bones, record-only camcorder that weighed just three pounds with battery and cassette. It had three shooting

controls, an indoor/outdoor switch, a close/medium/far focus switch, and the run/stop button. It was the closest thing to an instant camera ever to hit the video market. Our only complaint was with the focus system—you ran the risk of out-of-focus pictures because the viewfinder didn't remind you to change the focus.

The Handycam's successor, the CCD-

V3 Auto Handycam, has auto-focus, along with a 2.5x zoom lens with macro capability, an electronic viewfinder, switchable linear auto white balance, a backlight switch, and record review. All this adds to the weight of the original. However, there is no longer a separate player to worry about.

Standard RCA-type audio and video jacks are on the rear panel and a match-box-sized RF adapter plugs directly into those jacks, drawing power from the camcorder through a convenient mini jack. The battery, the same NP-22 used in all of Sony's 8mm products, powers the camcorder for about 70 minutes, and charges in about 60 minutes with the supplied charger and AC adapter. The AC adapter may also be substituted for the battery to allow direct AC operation.

Description. The camcorder with EVF weighs 3 lbs. 2 oz., with another 10.5 oz. for the battery and 1.5 oz. for a P6-90 90-minute cassette. The Auto Handycam is black with a removable grip on the right side. Behind the handle is the red run/stop button with a sliding safety cover that turns off the power. In record, the function switch must be in camera position and the safety cover must be in standby.

Further up the curved grip is the grip release, while a grooved finger rest and the battery eject button are on the grip's top surface. At the front is the compartment that accepts either the battery or the AC adapter. An adjustable strap wraps your right hand for safety and support.

The connector for the removable EVF is on the right side of the camera above the grip. Further forward is the accessory shoe, a bulge for the microphone mount, and jacks for an external mic and mic power. The mic power jack, labelled DC out, connects to microphones like Sony's optional super-directional.

The top has three areas. At the left is a grooved area that lifts during cassette loading. The forward quarter hosts a slide switch with camera, player, and off positions, plus buttons for play, stop, pause, fast forward, and rewind in play mode. At the right is the channel for the EVF which locks in three horizontal positions and tilts upward for low-angle shooting. It has screwdriver controls (best left alone) for electrical focus and brightness, and a removable, adjustable, magnifier for its 0.7-inch CRT.

The left side of the camcorder is mostly occupied by the cassette hatch. Forward of that are slide switches for white balance (auto/indoor/outdoor) and focus (auto/manual). Below the focus is a button for one-shot autofocus. Further forward are buttons for backlight control, for shooting dark objects against a bright background, and record review, which replays the last few seconds of the previous shot.

The lens has a knurled ring for manual focus and a zoom ring with a stubby lever

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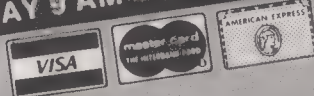
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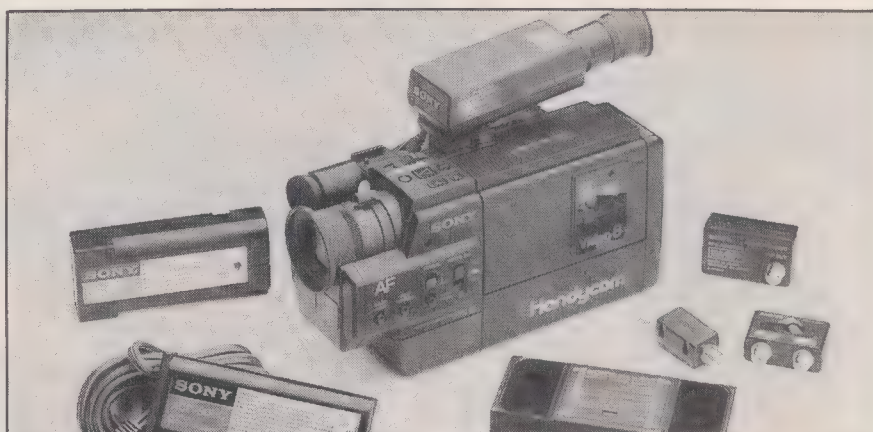
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Videotests



Sony CCD-V3 Auto Handycam Camcorder

Test Report: Sony CCD-V3 Record/Play 8mm Auto Handycam

DATA

Date of test: October 1986
Suggested retail price: \$1500
Weight: 3 pounds 2 ounces, camcorder;
10.5 ounces, battery; 1.5 ounces, P6-90
cassette
Dimensions: 6-1/8 x 5-1/8 x 9-3/8 inches
(h x w x d)
Power requirements: 6VDC
Power consumption: 6.9 W
Image sensor: 2/3-inch CCD
Lens: f/1.6, 2.5x (12-30mm) zoom with
macro
Filter diameter: 46mm
Minimum focusing distance: 4 feet
Field at closest focus: 23.5x30 inches,
tele; 9x12 inches, wide angle
Minimum illumination: 16 lux (15 foot-
candles), rated; 16.4 lux, measured
Auto focus: infrared type
White balance: linear automatic switch-
able to preset daylight (5800K), or indoor
(3200K)
Iris: automatic with switchable backlight
compensation
Sensitivity: single range
Viewfinder: electronic, 0.7-inch CRT
with onscreen indicators for record, stand-
by, indoor, outdoor, backlight, tape end,
battery, low light, cassette, and caution
plus external tally light
Viewfinder controls: magnifier focus,
electrical focus, and brightness
Auto fade: no
VCR controls: run/pause, play, stop, fast
forward, rewind, edit, and review
Microphone: omnidirectional electret
condenser, jacks for external mic and mic
power
Cable length: none
Plug: none
Jacks: mic, mic power, viewfinder, video
out, audio out, and power out for RF
modulator
Tape format: 8mm
Tape speeds: SP, record; SP and LP,
play
Play speed select: automatic
Still frame: yes
Frame advance: no
Slow motion: no

Speed play: no
Rapid search: see Cue & review
Cue & review: 7x, approx.
Visible FF and Rew: no
Fast Forward/rew time: 3 min. (P6-90)
Remote pause: no
Remote: no
Separate eject: yes, with safety
Counter digits: none
Counter memory: none
Program start locator/index/cue: no
Audio dub: no
Video dub: no
Auto rewind: no
Linear audio: none
Hi-Fi (AFM) audio: mono
Accessories: supplied—ACP-80UC AC
pack, BCA-70 battery charger, NP-22 bat-
tery, RFU-88C RF adaptor, P6-15 blank
cassette, ANS-36 antenna selector, EAC-
24 antenna matching transformer, RF ca-
ble (2), and shoulder strap; optional—hard
carrying case, telescopic microphone, vid-
eo light, world wide AC pack, car battery
adaptor, car battery cord, teleconversion
lens, and wide angle conversion lens

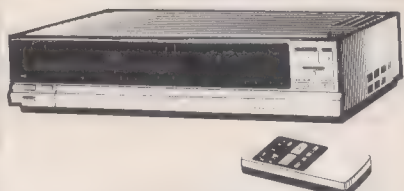
RESULTS & RATINGS

Horizontal resolution: 240- lines
S/N, video luminance: 44.7 dB, un-
weighted; 47.5 dB, weighted
S/N, chroma AM: 42.8 dB
S/N, chroma PM: 44.3 dB
Audio frequency response: 27-17,200
Hz, +0/-3dB; 20-20,000 Hz, -7.8dB
S/N, audio: 57.3 dB
Audio distortion: 0.4 percent
Overall picture quality: very good/ex-
cellent
Audio quality: very good/excellent
Ease of operation: very good/excellent
Overall performance: very good/excel-
lent
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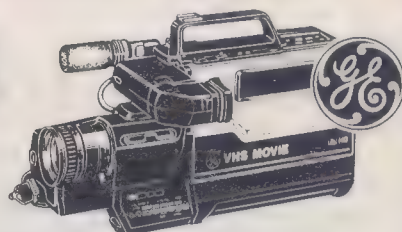
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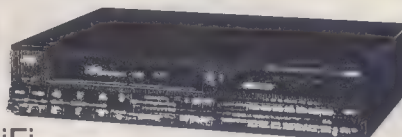


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and release for macro focus. Slightly left of the lens is a white window for the linear auto white balance, and below the lens are two windows for the infrared autofocus.

The bottom of the Auto Handycam is bare but for a threaded tripod socket. At the back are the eject button with a safety catch, indicators for battery, caution and dew, and jacks for audio, video, and DC out.

Supplied accessories include the RF out-

put adapter, an RF switch, a 75-ohm antenna cable, a 75-300 ohm antenna transformer, a battery, an ACP-80UC AC pack/battery charger, a BCA-70 battery charge adapter, and P6-15 15-minute cassette. The battery charge adapter is a little different from those supplied with other Sony 8mm machines in that it can charge only one battery at a time, but since a battery operates the camcorder for longer than it takes to charge, you can shoot continuous-

ly using just two batteries.

Operation. The Auto Handycam is as easy to use as its predecessor. To record, put the power switch in camera mode and select auto white balance and autofocus. Use backlight and record review only when needed. For normal operation, you need only zoom and run/stop. Use manual focus or one shot autofocus only when IR autofocus can't cope, and fixed white balance only when the light is exceedingly low. Playback is equally easy. Select the play mode and you have just the five controls below the power switch: stop, play, pause, rewind and fast forward. In play, rewind and fast forward buttons activate 7x visual search.

The Auto Handycam's worst drawback is its 2.5x zoom range, though a wider range would require a heavier, more complex lens. The IR autofocus has the usual limitations at distances over 25 feet, under low light, with repetitive patterns, on dark subjects, and on angled subjects. There is no way to record from a video source, but the CCD-V3 wasn't intended for that purpose. The camcorder itself tends to tilt away from the grip, but tucking your elbow close to your waist provides steadier support.

Our only real concern is a little space at the right of the lens where there is a little too much clearance. You could drop a pin into it, or sand could get into the works. Such narrow gaps are present on other camcorders, but here you can see the innards through the space. Overall, however, ease of use is very good/excellent compared to other camcorders with both record and playback.

Performance. The camcorder delivers better pictures than the Handycam. Horizontal resolution is a smidgen less than 240 lines, like standard VHS, rather than the 230 line resolution of the first 8mm machines. The video signal-to-noise ratio is 44.7 dB, unweighted, and 47.5 dB, weighted. The chroma AM S/N ratio is 42.8 dB, a little low. But the chroma PM S/N ratio is 44.3 dB, among the best measured. Based just on the numbers, the CCD-V3 performs like a VHS machine and a smidgen behind the best 8mm, Sony's CCD-V110. This unit rates very good/excellent by 8mm standards.

On audio, at -3 dB, its frequency response was 27 to 17,200 Hz, and it covered the whole frequency range at -8 dB. Distortion was less than 0.4 percent and the audio S/N ratio was 57.3 dB. Those measurements are between the linear track and Hi-Fi performance levels on half-inch

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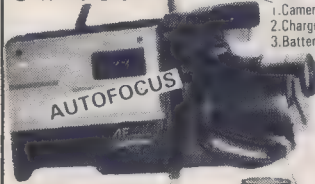
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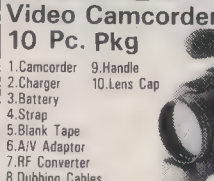
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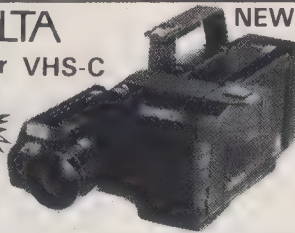
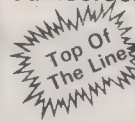
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Conclusion. The Auto Handycam, at \$1500, is \$300 cheaper than the first Handycam's original price. It delivers a picture that nearly equals most other 8mm and VHS camcorders, though it doesn't have all the refinements of the CCD-V110 8mm camcorder. Your decision, however, should be based on your needs. The resolution of 8mm is not as high as SuperBeta's, and there is much more prerecorded programming for VHS. The Auto Handycam is aimed at those who want a tiny camcorder that is easy to operate, with basic features for making good pictures. For that purpose it is a very successful machine.

Toshiba VHS VCR with Digital Effects



VIDEO-TEST
379

come available to consumers. But it is possible now to use digital circuitry to enhance the picture, sound, and features in analog VCRs.

Toshiba's DX-7 was the first consumer VCR with digital special effects to be demonstrated (but not the first to make it to market). It uses its digital muscle to produce rock-steady still picture and slow motion, and to freeze pictures off live TV.

Toshiba calls its HQ version HQ Pro because it has all four HQ elements: an extended white clip level, luminance and chrominance noise reduction, and detail

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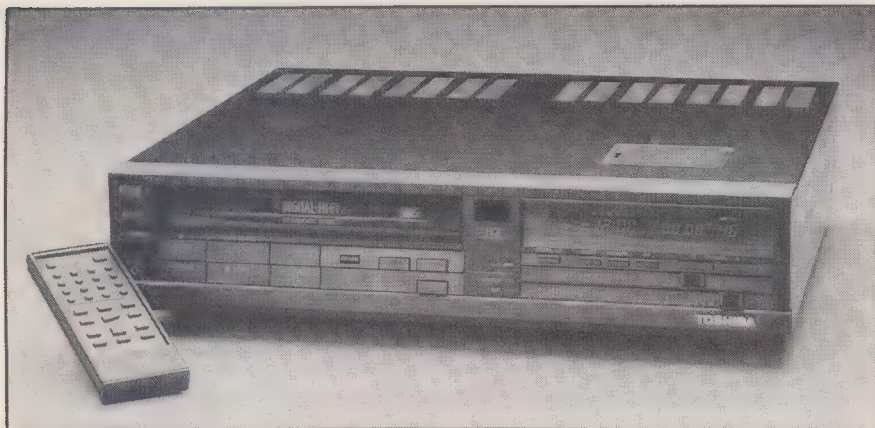
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Toshiba DX-7 VHS VCR with Digital Effects

enhancement. Toshiba also included a wide band filter and a dynamic picture enhancer for better stability and frequency fidelity, response, plus an edit mode for better dubs. Other attractive features are two picture search speeds at EP and an automatic visual indexing (AVI) system to find the beginning of recorded segments from cues put on the tape every time you stop or pause a recording.

Description. Toshiba's DX-7 weighs 20.2 pounds, and measures 4-3/8 inches high by 17 inches wide by 14-3/4 inches

deep. The front panel is a little busier than other recent models that seem intended more for remote operation. The DX-7 has a full remote but you can run it easily from the front panel.

Along the left edge are the power and eject buttons, and the stereo headphones. To their right is the cassette hatch plus buttons for rewind, play, fast forward, TV/VCR, the timer, and one touch record. A bottom row has buttons for TV still-frame, stop, pause/still, and record.

Next right is a column with the sen-

sor window for the IR wireless remote, and indicators for Hi-Fi, stereo signal, and SAP. At the right edge is a display panel above buttons for stereo/left/right, counter reset, counter memory, AVI, and channel down and up. At the bottom are displays and sliders for the Hi-Fi level.

The plain black band with the logo flips down to expose a compartment with sliders for the headphone level, picture sharpness, and tracking; and buttons for the clock and timer and programming instructions. An SP/EP record speed selector affects both manual and programmed recordings. There are other switches for normal/HP/edit, linear track record L+R/SAP, meter select level/tracking, input select TV/line/AVmix (simulcast), record level auto and manual, and audio output Hi-Fi/normal.

A second compartment on the top has a switch for auto stereo/forced mono, and buttons for preset on/off, band select, tuning \pm , channel settings, and fine tuning LED. The remainder of the top, bottom, and sides are bare but for ventilation holes.

The rear panel has the power cord, an unswitched accessory AC outlet, F connectors for VHF, knurled screws for UHF, a channel 3/4 RF switch, and line inputs and outputs for video and stereo audio.



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Videotests

The remote control is simple, too, with buttons for power, TV/VCR, 16 tuning presets, record, TV/still, rewind and search, play, fast forward and search, pause/still, stop, AVI, stereo/R/L, 1/4x slow, and 2x play.

Operation. You can use most of the controls intuitively. The still pictures and slow motion are exceedingly and surprisingly good. The TV still-frame is very useful because it lets you freeze live TV pictures to copy recipes or phone numbers, but it won't work if you're taping the show at the same time.

Other unusual features are equally simple. Accelerated search in EP lets you search at 15x instead of 5x, but we've always found that finding a specific frame using locking search is harder than with non-locking search because you usually overshoot. With AVI, the VCR stops and plays three seconds of the program at every marker when you're in fast forward or rewind. The feature cannot be used at the same time as the counter memory.

Also unusual is an edit position on the HR Pro or HP switch that removes one of the filters normally in the playback circuit. The filter reduces visual noise, but it also contributes to generation loss when dubbing. The edit position lets you make better dubs. We rate the DX-7's ease of operation as very good/excellent because we would have preferred scan tuning and random access on the remote rather than just 16 presets.

Performance. On picture quality the DX-7 equals Toshiba's M-5900, which had the best video signal-to-noise ratio among the recorders we measured last year. In addition to 240+ lines of horizontal resolution, its video S/N ratio was 46.8 decibels, unweighted; 49.6 dB, weighted; and 55.6 dB weighted with scan compensation on. The chroma AM S/N was an impressive 44 dB. Chroma PM S/N was 36.2 dB. With the extra edge definition of HQ circuitry, it produces an excellent picture.

On audio its frequency response was within +0.4/-1.5 dB over the 20 to 20,000 Hertz range at both recording speeds, with a dynamic range near its rated 90 dB. On the linear track, it showed a -3 dB frequency response from 100 to 15,000 Hz at SP, and from 100 to 6000 Hz at EP with a 42 dB S/N ratio. It made its 80 Hz low end specification to within -6 dB. Total harmonic distortion was 0.22 percent on Hi-Fi and 1.8 percent on the linear track. So audio performance was excellent, overall.

Conclusion. We admire the DX-7. Its picture quality is a leader among the HQ VHS VCRs. Its audio is among the best, and its few operational minuses among an impressive list of features can be ignored if picture and sound quality is what you're after. Its suggested price is just \$849.95, a steal for such a great performer. We recommend it highly.

Test Report: Toshiba DX-7 HQ VHS Hi-Fi VCR with MTS and Digital Effects

DATA

Date of test: October 1986

Suggested price: \$849.95

Weight: 20.2 pounds

Dimensions: 4-3/8 x 17 x 14-3/4 inches
(h x w x d)

Power requirements: 120 VAC, 60 Hz

Power consumption: 42 W

Tape format: HQ VHS

Tape speeds: SP/EP, record; SP/LP/EP, play, with limited effects quality at LP

Play speed select: automatic

Still frame: using digital memory

Frame advance: no

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Videotests

play to return to normal; accelerated search (15x) by holding down fast forward or rewind in EP

Visible fast forward and rewind: no

Fast forward/rewind time: about 6 min. for T-120

Remote pause: no

Remote: IR wireless with buttons for power, TV/VCR, 16 direct access pre-sets, record (2 buttons), TV still, rewind and search, play, fast forward and search, pause/still, stop, AVI, stereo/right/left, slow, and 2x.

Separate eject: yes

Counter digits: 4

Counter memory: yes

Program start locator/index/cue: AVI—automatic visual indexing

Audio dub: no

Video dub: no

Auto rewind: yes

Linear audio: mono

Hi-Fi audio: stereo

Tuning method: voltage synthesis

Channel selectors: up/down scan on set; 16 direct-access presets on remote

Preset method: select station and channel number for each of 12 preset positions

Broadcast tuning range: 2 to 13, 14 to 83

Cable tuning range: 2 to 13, A2, A1, A to I, J to W, AA to JJ

AFT: switchable

MTS stereo: yes

SAP: yes, recordable on linear track

Channel lock: yes

Timer: 4 event, 7 days

Auto channel-change: yes

Accessories: remote control with batteries and channel numbers, audio cable, antenna cables, and transformers

RESULTS & RATINGS

Horizontal resolution: rated and measured—240 lines nominal

S/N, video luminance: rated—45 dB; measured—46.8/45.4 dB (SP/EP), un-weighted; 49.6/48.6 dB, weighted; 55.6/54.2 dB, weighted and sag compensated

S/N, chroma AM: measured—44.0/37.3 dB (SP/EP)

S/N, chroma PM: measured—36.2/34.2 dB (SP/EP)

Audio frequency response: rated—20-20,000 Hz, Hi-Fi; 80-12,000 Hz, linear; measured—20-20,000 Hz, +0.4/-1.5 dB, SP/EP Hi-Fi; 100-15,000 Hz, -3dB, SP; 100-6000 Hz, -3 dB, EP

S/N, linear audio: measured—42 dB

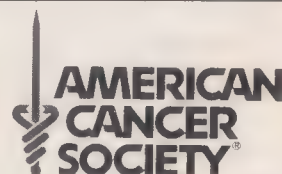
Audio distortion: rated—0.3 percent, Hi-Fi; measured—0.22 percent, Hi-Fi; 1.8 percent, linear

Overall picture quality: excellent

Audio quality: excellent

Ease of operation: very good/excellent

Overall performance: excellent



VIDEO RETAILERS

Have trouble finding copies of VIDEO at your local newsstand? Want to know where to send a friend to pick up a copy? The following will help—it's a list of retail stores across the country, that carry at least 20 copies of VIDEO every month.

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NEC DX-1000U VHS VCR with Digital Effects

NEC VHS VCR with Digital Effects



NEC is introducing two VCRs that use digital circuitry for special effects and noise reduction. Of the two, its mid-priced DX-1000 is the first to become available. Its most attractive feature is its use of the digital circuitry for

noise reduction instead of more flashy effects like picture-in-picture or colorization. Noise is one of the most disturbing picture defects; reducing it makes viewing more enjoyable. Digital circuitry is also used to deliver jitter-free still frame and 1/3x slow motion.

The VCR also offers HQ circuitry but only two elements are used: the extended white clip level and detail enhancement.

NEC left the luminance noise reduction to the digital circuitry. Other attractive features are onscreen programming, two-speed picture search, a 4-event/21-day timer, auto power on, power off eject, and voltage synthesis tuning with 40 presets.

Description. The NEC DX-1000U is black and measures 4-1/4 inches wide by 17 inches wide by 14-3/4 inches deep. It weighs 17.7 pounds. Its front panel has 12 buttons, but doesn't look busy.

The thin buttons across the top/bottom divider are for power, eject, VCR/TV, digital memory, channel -, channel +, slow, and pause/still. The channel buttons also set the time and timer. At the far right are play and stop buttons. Below are two more for rewind and fast forward, which double for reverse and forward search.

The lower half conceals a compartment for a normal/preset tuning switch, buttons for scan and "memory & shift," rotary controls for tracking and sharpness, an on/off switch, and a rotary control for the digital noise reduction. Two additional rows of controls are also present. At the left, on a black background, are buttons for timed recording in 30-minute segments, timer record, a red record button, the SP/LP/EP record speed switch, the clock/timer settings, and the counter.

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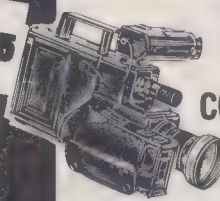


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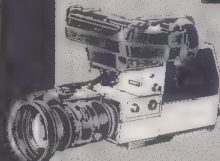
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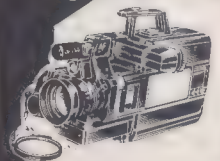
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Test Report: NEC DX-1000U HQ VHS VCR with Digital Effects And Noise Reduction

DATA

Date of test: October 1986
Suggested retail price: \$599
Weight: 17.7 pounds
Dimensions: 4-1/4 x 17 x 14-3/4 inches (h/w/d)
Power requirements: 120 VAC, 60 Hz
Power consumption: 34 W
Tape format: HQ VHS
Tape speeds: SP/LP/EP
Play speed select: automatic
Still frame: yes using digital storage
Frame advance: yes, using Digital Memory button
Slow motion: 1/3x
Speed play: no
Rapid search: see Cue & review

Cue & review: locking type—6x, SP; 7x, LP; 9x, EP plus Jet Search on second push of search button of 8x, SP; 14x, LP; 21x, EP
Visible fast forward and rewind: no
Fast forward/rewind time: 3-3/4 min for T-120
Remote pause: no
Remote: IR wireless with VCR control buttons for power, eject, 10-digit tuning keypad, channel up and down (set - and +), onscreen display, set timer mode, shift - and +, TV/VCR, counter/timer, counter reset, 2 record buttons, 2 timer record buttons, stop, rewind (search), play, fast forward (search), slow, digital memory/frame advance, and pause/still; a switch to change remote to controlling some NEC TVs; and control of TV tuning, volume, TV/video, ant/aux, mute, channel recall, and sleep timer

Separate eject: yes
Counter digits: 4
Counter memory: yes
Program start locator/index/cue: no
Audio dub: no
Video dub: no
Auto rewind: yes
Linear audio: mono
Hi-Fi audio: none
Tuning method: voltage synthesis
Channel selectors: 40-channel scan from VCR, scan or random access of 40 presets from remote
Preset method: select channel in preset scan and assign number between 0 and 99
Broadcast tuning range: 2 to 13, 14 to 83
Cable tuning range: 2 to 13, 14 mid-band, and 14 superband
Channel lock: yes
Timer: 4 event, 21 day

In the top row against a blue background are buttons for time adjust, timer mode, and shift \pm . Below are ones for clock/counter switching, counter memory, counter reset, and a switch for the onscreen display.

Operation. Five buttons connect you with the digital features: still, slow, digital memory, digital NR on/off, and digital NR level. The first two give you sharp, non-jit-

tery pictures. The digital memory captures and displays a still frame from a tape that continues to play or from a live broadcast received through the VCR's tuner. Pushing the button again restores the program.

The other two controls are part of the digital noise reduction system. A switch turns it off and on, and a rotary control adjusts its level.

Chief among its less exotic features is

two-speed search at each playing speed: 6x and 8x search at SP, 7x and 14x at LP and 9 and 21x at EP. At the higher speeds there is enough picture for cueing but not watching. Its 4-event/21-day timer is unusual, too, in that it offers as a single event the choice of every day taping.

Onscreen programming from either the VCR or the remote is very useful and the display, including the function readout, can

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Auto channel-change: yes
Accessories: remote control with batteries, antenna cables, and antenna transformer

RESULTS & RATINGS


Horizontal resolution: 240 lines at sharpness control detent
S/N, video luminance: 46/45.7/45.4 dB (SP/LP/EP), unweighted; 55.3/55.2/54.1 dB, weighted (sag compensation on)
S/N, chroma AM: 40.2 dB
S/N, chroma PM: 36.6 dB
Audio frequency-response, -3 dB: 63-12,000 Hz, SP; 63-8000 Hz, LP; 50-6300 Hz, EP
S/N, audio: 45.2 dB
Audio distortion: 1.9 percent
Overall picture quality: excellent
Audio quality: very good
Ease of operation: good
Overall performance: very good

be switched off. The remote's ability to control other TVs is also unusual in a mid-priced VCR.

Among features you may miss are camera remote, stereo, and the smoother search four heads would bring, but some compromises had to be made to keep the price down. You may also wish the tuner wasn't confined to 40 presets. We rate ease of operation as good because of the absence of such features and because it is too easy to trigger the wrong function in some buttons.

Performance. Noise on recorded tapes is disturbing, and the DX-1000 shines in using its digital circuitry to remove random noise—the graininess or snowiness associated with weak signals. It is less effective with periodic, or fixed pattern, noise. Its resolution with the sharpness control at detent is 240 lines. It makes its rated video signal-to-noise ratio of 46 decibels, unweighted at SP with noise reduction off. With NR on, there is a further reduction of 2 to 3 dB, depending on the type of noise. The chroma AM S/N ratio is 40.2 dB and the chroma PM S/N ratio is 39.6 dB. We rate its picture as excellent.

The audio frequency response of -3 dB was 63-12,000 Hertz at SP, 63-8000 Hz at LP, and 50-6300 at EP. This is typical for good linear track VCRs. The audio S/N ratio was 45.2 dB with a total harmonic distortion of 1.9 percent, so we rate audio as very good compared to linear track machines.

Conclusion. NEC's DX-1000 is the first consumer VCR to use digital circuitry for noise reduction. Of course we want every bell and whistle digital technology can deliver so we want more special effects, too. Let's say NEC chose the feature that contributes the most to its excellent picture quality. Its audio is very good, and it is easy to operate, but we miss some features. Its suggested price is \$599. We recommend it highly in its price class. 

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YEAR IN GEAR

continued from page 48

impressive. Its high quality amplifier with concert hall and surround effects is in a class by itself. The third Beta tested was Sony's SL-HF550, a mid-priced machine with over 270 lines of resolution (like all SuperBetas) and the edit switch Sony puts on all SuperBetas to maintain resolution during dubbing. We also reviewed Sony's BMC-660 SuperBetamovie, a record-only camcorder delivering SuperBeta quality with time and date superimposing.

8MM DEVICES

At first, 8mm was used only in camcorders, but now there is a table model VCR and one built into a Sony 25-inch XBR monitor/receiver. Our favorite was Sony's CCD-V110 Pro Video 8 camcorder/player, with built-in titler and SEG, plus a processor loop for manipulating the video signal between the camera and recorder.

Kodak's MVS (Modular Video System) is really a system with a choice of two camera heads, two VCRs (one digital stereo), and two programmable tuner/timers (one MTS equipped). Any VCR will work with any camera head or tuner/timer in snap-together fashion; if you prefer, a separate camera and recorder connected by an

umbilical cord is also an option. And, of course, with the recorder married to a tuner/timer, a VCR becomes a convertible table model. In terms of operational flexibility Kodak's MVS leads the entire consumer video industry.

Canon's VM-E1 Canonvision 8, streamlined camcorder/player, was the plainest of those that could both record from its camera and player. But the simplest was Sony's pocketable Handycam, which doesn't play back and has minimal controls. Handycam is the video instamatic.

Sony's 8mm EV-S700U behaves so much like a topnotch VHS or Beta table model that you may wonder how they made one so small. Complete with digital sound, it has one tiny compromise—a frequency response limited to 15,000 Hertz. Sony's KV-25XVR monitor/receiver with 8mm recorder also deserves praise for performance, space conservation, and usefulness. But wide applicability depends on the supply of pre-recorded software, including digital music-only releases with up to 24 hours of music on one cassette. Yet, in the 8mm category, the CCD-V110—with its higher resolution and studio in a box features—is our choice.

LV PLAYERS

Both LV players we reviewed reproduce either analog or digital discs. The Yamaha (a new LV manufacturer) does give a few extra lines of resolution but the Pioneer plays both LVs and CDs, and offers a number of memories for rearranging selection order on either type of disc. So we welcome Yamaha as a manufacturer but choose the Pioneer for this year's best. Nothing spurs development as much as competition. We prefer the Pioneer because of its multiple functions; the Yamaha's slight resolution edge does not create a visible difference on standard program material. Until software reaches above the Pioneer's limit they are equivalent. We consider the Pioneer CLD-909 among the year's four best products.

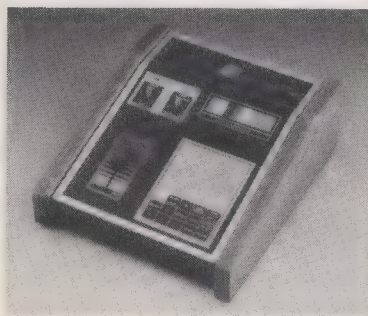
MONITOR/RECEIVERS

We reviewed six, including a 7-inch Quasar UP1775E portable with a good picture—great for field monitoring—but no MTS. Our favorite of the remainder was the Zenith SB2741X, with the best picture and sound, followed by Magnavox's GR7290BH, with its very friendly remote. Both are 27-inch consoles. Our favorite non-console was the Proton 625 25-inch MTS model, although for top sound quality you must resort to external speakers.

PROJECTION SYSTEMS

We reviewed four. The Kloss Model 100, a front projection type, can deliver

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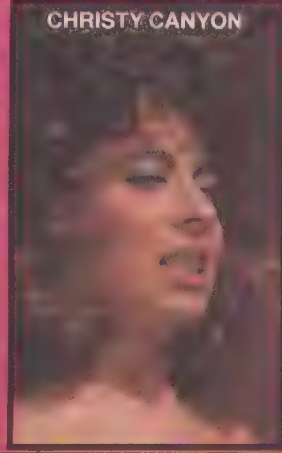
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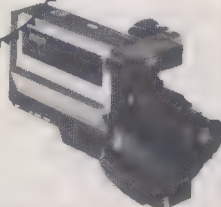
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6.5, 10, or 15 foot (diagonal) pictures and has excellent circuitry. That alone makes it worthy of mention. However, it is only a monitor—a tuner is required for broadcast reception.

At the other end of the spectrum, the 36-inch Sony Access 401 system is the second brightest projector we've seen. The system includes a tuner-controller, tower speakers with a detachable surround module, and a rack. We reviewed it with an audio package consisting of a CD player, a turntable, and a dual-well cassette deck, all controlled by a single remote. (The same projector is available as a monitor/receiver with tuner and more modest controls for a Sony VCR). The 401 system is a top performer but some may prefer a bigger screen.

Of the two self-contained rear projectors reviewed—the 40-inch Pioneer SD-P40 and the 46-inch NEC PJ-4650EN—the NEC proved more impressive. But what the Pioneer lacks in size it more than makes up for in picture. It's brighter, with cleaner, less muddy color and none of the geometric distortion visible on the NEC. We'd pick the Pioneer as our favorite among reviewed projection systems, another of the year's top four.

PERIPHERALS

The seven accessories we tested separate neatly into audio/video devices and audio-only devices. The audio-only devices include the best surround decoder we've ever tested, Shure's HTS5000, and two Recoton MTS decoders, F.R.E.D. I and F.R.E.D. III. We prefer the F.R.E.D. III: it can decode SAP signals as well as stereo, works directly from channel 3 or 4 sources like cable boxes, and has a built-in amplifier. Choosing between the MTS5000 and F.R.E.D. III is meaningless; they do such different jobs you'd want both.

The audio/video devices include three SEGs and a Radio Shack Video-Audio Control center (switcher or signal selector). Each does a creditable job, but none does significantly more than the other and choosing among them isn't realistic. We're still waiting for the perfect SEG.

LOOKING BACK

We found four products we'd unquestionably want to own: Pioneer's SD-40 projection system and CLD-909 CD/LV player, the Sony SL-HF1000 Hi-Band Super-Beta with editing functions, and Sony's CCD-V110 8mm camcorder/player.

VHS machines can't match these videophile beauties, but the format deserves praise for its introduction of HQ circuitry. Of the VHS VCRs we reviewed, Toshiba's M-5900, Akai's VS-565U, and Zenith's VR-4100 were standouts. RCA's CMR300 camcorder was our favorite in that category. What we're really waiting for is a VHS deck with HQ, digital effects, and advanced editing features. Maybe next year.

YEAR IN TAPES

continued from page 52

audience. But, unlike the unpredictably temporal and often regional existence of movies in theaters, a tape release is (almost) forever, and can potentially remain, indefinitely, available from Alaska to Albuquerque. As long as they're on tape, all kinds of minority movies—foreign, independent, documentary, extremist, arty, and just plain esoteric—can have a long, much deserved shelf life.

Quirky, offbeat films from diverse sources provided much of 1986's finest video entertainment. Some did relatively well in limited theatrical runs, while others barely made it to silver screens at all.

Not only does *Salvador* (Vestron) offer a refreshingly skeptical view of American foreign policy, its three stars—James Woods, John Savage, and Jim Belushi—invest the story of a journalist/adventurer way out of his element in a deadly political cauldron with palpable tension and believable madness. Generally overlooked during its theatrical run, *Salvador* wins our 1986 VMA for Best Film (Drama).

Kiss of the Spider Woman (Charter) and *The Trip to Bountiful* (Embassy), atypical films on atypical subjects, did well in theaters and earned kudos from our reviewers for their tape releases. William Hurt won an Oscar for his performance in the former; Geraldine Page did likewise for the latter. Video-ready adults found additional intelligent, thought-provoking alternatives to television and junk movies with Alan Rudolph's *Trouble in Mind* (Charter), a bizarre crime fable with surrealistic, philosophical overtones; *Creator* (Thorn), a charming Peter O'Toole mad-scientist-love-story vehicle; *Runaway Train* (MGM/UA), a gripping action parable with Jon Voight, Eric Roberts, and tons of churning steel; *At Close Range* (Vestron), the intense Sean Penn/Christopher Walken murder drama; *Smooth Talk* (Vestron), Joyce Chopra's enigmatic and controversial exploration of a teenaged girl's sexual awakening, starring Laura Dern; and *Plenty* (Thorn), an allegory of England after the trauma of World War II, forcefully realized by Meryl Streep.

A pair of significant historical films with grave logistical hazards made for excellent, provocative video viewing, while illustrating both the problems and possibilities of film-to-tape transfer. Running nearly four hours, *Napoleon* (MCA), the restored silent biographical epic, doesn't play very often in neighborhood theaters, so the video release of this celluloid classic is enormously welcome. But panoramic scope and widescreen effect makes the film far less breathtaking on television's almost-square face. And, for some, the hazards of watching this at home—amidst talking, phones, bathroom breaks—may prove too distracting for attentive appreciation.

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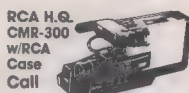
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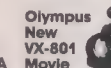
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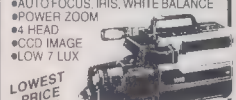


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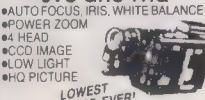
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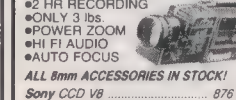
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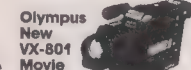
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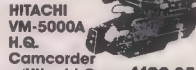
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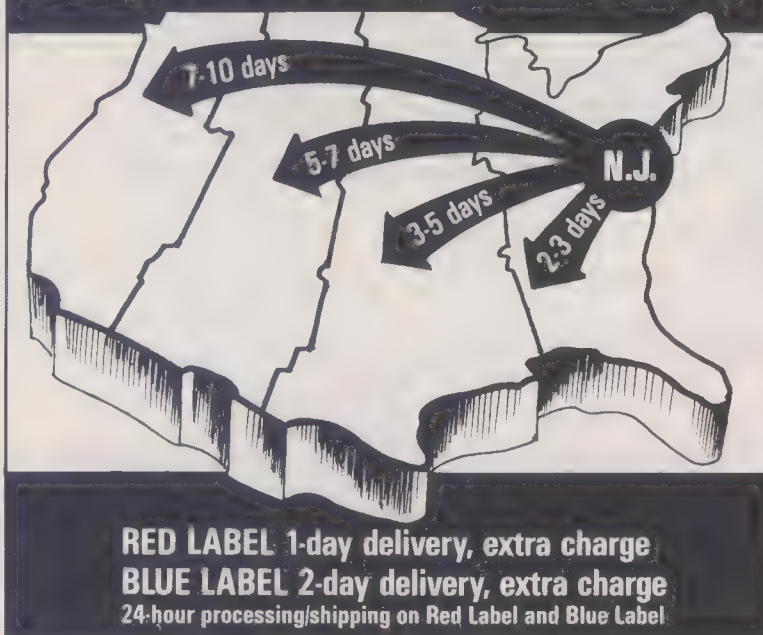
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The length of *Shoah* (Paramount), Claude Lanzmann's prodigious nine-hour-plus Holocaust documentary, makes its video release positively essential. The film's harrowing content—victims and torturers alike recalling their horrible experiences—is perhaps best absorbed in the most reassuring surroundings, with the option of watching it in emotionally tolerable doses. Another fascinating and unhappy piece of cinema verite, *Streetwise* (New World), chronicles homeless Seattle adolescents living—and dying—by their wits. This unsettling slice of contemporary sociology wins the **1986 VMA for Best Film (Documentary)**.

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Every year, there are films that should never have been made, much less transferred to tape to extend their miserable lives. Herewith the 1986 hall of outrageous silliness, in chronological order: *Clan of the Cave Bear* (CBS/Fox), with Daryl Hannah unbelievable as a fast-track Cro-Magnon; *Revolution* (Warner), with Al Pacino unbelievable as an 18th century American patriot; *Pirates (U.S.A.)*, with Walter Matthau unbelievable as an 18th century buccaneer; *Jo Jo Dancer, Your Life Is Calling* (RCA/Columbia), with Richard Pryor unbelievable as himself; *Power* (Karl-Lorimar), with Richard Gere unbelievable as a political media consultant; and *Enemy Mine* (CBS/Fox), with Lou Gossett Jr. unbelievable as an alien hermaphrodite.

FEAR OF MUSIC

Pre-recorded music video has still not become the cash cow its boosters hoped for, but not because of any dearth of releases. The year's crop included a number of important film documentaries: Jonathan Demme's Talking Heads concert movie, *Stop Making Sense* (RCA/Columbia); Sting's patronization of some fine American jazz players, *Bring on the Night* (Karl-Lorimar); *Monterey Pop* (Sony), the classic record of a legendary 1967 rock festival, directed by D.A. Pennebaker, who two years earlier had followed Bob Dylan on a historic British tour for the revealing *Dont Look Back* (Paramount).

Some real musical finds came out of the archives: the first volume of *Dick Clark's Best of Bandstand* (Vestron) offers some extraordinary black & white footage of rock's pioneers; *John Lennon Live in New York City* (Sony) brings a ragged but heartfelt 1972 performance to a new generation of Beatlemaniacs, who should also thrill to the release of *The Beatles Live* (Sony), a brief 1964 British television appearance. Even songs that predated the MTV age got video-ized in *Deja View* (Karl-Lorimar), a star-studded program that surprisingly avoided the obvious dangers and proved quite entertaining. *Motown Time Capsule: The 60's* (MCA), a thought-provoking marriage of familiar songs and strong topical images, was another welcome innovation.

Dozens upon dozens of musicians from every imaginable genre—country, classical, new wave, heavy metal, R&B, easy listening, etc.—tested the video waters with tapes this year, and the winner of the 1986 VMA for Best Music Program is *The Best of Elvis Costello and the Attractions* (CBS/Fox), a compilation of lively, inventive rock videos.

JOCKS AND YOCKS

Instant video became almost commonplace this year, with everything from boxing matches to the Fourth of July festivities issued on video within a matter of weeks. Prince Andrew's wedding was memorialized with several tapes, as were countless sporting events, including the Masters Tournament, the NBA playoffs, the Super Bowl, the World Cup, and more wrestling matches than you could possibly imagine (or sit through). Baseball and football teams got into the video act, with tapes of past and present season highlights. The Mets celebrated their success with three tapes—a music video, a season-highlights compilation, and a 25-year retrospective—while the Yankees put the present behind them and instead issued a chronicle of their unforgettable 1961 season, *Pinstripe Power* (Scotch), which wins our 1986 VMA for Best Sports Program.

Fulfilling its ultimately elliptical destiny, TV provided much of the year's video fodder: pilots of everything from *Star Trek* to *Moonlighting*, series episodes from the medium's golden age, enough mini-series to satisfy all tastes, spare time, and sophistication levels, and hordes of television movies from serious to ridiculous. Cable networks provided plenty of comedy and music specials, but the winner of our 1986 VMA for Best Comedy Program is a collection of sketches and short films from *Saturday Night Live*, starring an old favorite, *The Best of John Belushi* (Warner). Our new favorite, and the year's most original and invigorating television personality (edging out Pee-Wee Herman by a few well-coiffed blond hairs) is Max Headroom, smarmy artificial talk-show superstar and soda spokeshead. Max may be blanketing the airwaves, but his lone home video release (so far) is *Max Headroom: The Original Story* (Karl-Lorimar), an inventive, stylish British science fiction drama which wins our 1986 VMA for the Best Made-for-Television Program.

Is that all that happened on videotape in 1986? Not by a long shot. But if you don't mind, some of us have to get back to watching the latest releases...

YEAR IN DISCS

continued from page 56

Milius' *Big Wednesday* are only two examples), to Disney films (*Peter Pan* and *Song of the South*), to a series of Truffaut discs,

and even a collection of Polish art films.

Music abounds on videodisc in the Orient—jazz, rock, and classical—and seems to be growing by leaps and bounds. There are discs of popular animated films and TV series episodes. Buffs of all types—from obsessive golfers, to train nuts and airplane crazies—have discs that cater to their interest.

Best of all, Pioneer's Japanese software subsidiary has some talented producers in tune with the videodisc buyer's tastes, who come up with some truly shining examples of what the disc medium does best.

The "SFX Museum" series offers specially-produced programs about American special-effects artists and their movies. *Visual Pathfinders* consists of retrospectives on major filmmakers like German documentarist Leni Riefenstahl, computer graphics innovator John Whitney, commercial artist Robert Abel, and Canadian animator Norman McLaren. Junko Kamata has produced what may be the first interactive art film for cat fanciers, the stunning *Cat Time*.

When we started to assemble this wrap-up, we asked a friend, a LaserDisc fan but

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hardly a video fanatic, what we should say about the year in videodisc. His comments were right to the point. "Tell them," he said, "that there aren't enough videodiscs released, that they're too expensive, and that you can't find them anywhere." True enough.

In this world, where technology seems able to produce the objects of our dreams, the continued failure—or, better put, relative lack of success—of the laser videodisc is curious. A truly superior medium, still offering enormous promise, we can only hope that its fortune is greater in 1987. ✓

TITANIC

continued from page 63

in low-light imaging with deep submergence equipment.

He outlined two vehicles needed to accomplish the task: Argo, a sled loaded with three television cameras and a variety of lighting systems, and Argo's passenger, a small, maneuverable robot named Jason that would carry small, specialized video lighting and equipment. Argo would be

towed by a research ship; Jason would be sent out on a tether from the Argo to provide close-ups and sampling abilities to the scientists controlling it from the surface.

Ballard knew Argo and Jason would be perfect tools for finding and exploring the Titanic. (He'd tried in the late '70s to develop a way to send a camera down deep using drilling pipe, but an accident lost the equipment and the quest had languished.) The robots had the tremendous potential of a practical, fast visual search. Unexpectedly, the Navy agreed to fund the project—which has implications for submarine warfare and rescue operations—and did not object to testing the system by searching for the Titanic. The next step was to actually build the Argo/Jason.

Ballard began recruiting for the project in 1982. "We commandeered Ph.D.s on their way to work for General Motors on robotics, or Lockheed's missile/space program, and really infected them with the adventure of exploration underwater," he recalls. "We created this incredible talent base and, at one point, it went critical." Swept up in the excitement of the task, "old salts and electrical engineers" gathered at Woods Hole to find solutions to the problems of darkness, extreme pressure, ship-to-robot communication, and precision maneuvering.

The equipment was finally ready for testing in the summer of 1985. Setting off from Woods Hole in the research vessel Knorr with the Argo, the scientists were worried: a search of more than 80 percent of the Titanic area by the French research ship Le Suroit had turned up nothing. The hopes had been that Jean-Louis Michel, Ballard's French colleague and expeditionary co-chief scientist, would find the ship with the new deep-search sonar. Argo, and its older still-camera cousin Angus, would then be towed repeatedly over the liner.

THE PAYOFF

By now, the story of how a boiler from the great ship came into view about one a.m. on a dark, clear, unusually calm September night has added to the spectacular cache of romantic moments surrounding the Titanic. "That really hit you with a sledgehammer," Ballard remembers. "There were two people out there, a professional and a human. If you were busy it was okay, but when you weren't busy the Titanic would just smack that human. All the time you were getting jolts, as if electricity were being run through your body. It finally just wore you down."

The following July, Ballard returned with the Jason prototype, Jason Junior, to document the Titanic as she lies today, wholly wrecked and beyond salvage. Judging by the video evidence, telepresence really works. One of the most spectacular moments is when the Titanic first whispers into view, a faint and ghostly image, about 100 feet away at the furthest reach of the strobes that fight the darkness. There is no



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mistaking the sharp point of the bow and then—suddenly—the lights catch the fore-deck squarely, and the huge anchor, chains, and capstans come into view.

Jason's adventures down the first-class stairway are nothing less than a triumph of technical virtuosity and a final, compelling finish to any talk of salvage. As Jason runs out its tether, examining the outer edges of the boat deck, amid occasional well-preserved brass signs ("Officers and Crew Only" says one), we see what Ballard calls rusticles—icicle-sized rust formations extruding from window frames, railings, anything liable to rust. No wood is evident.

When Jason ventures inside, the camera reveals a beautiful chandelier, but little else that is recognizable. Everything that was organic is gone; the metal of the great ship, which lived only four days, is in two huge sections, apparently ripped apart by the stress of tilting nearly vertical just before sinking. Believed unsinkable by her generation, the Titanic has been imagined perfectly preserved and salvageable by ours.

Both faiths, rooted in the idea that man can dominate nature, were proven wrong.

With the video program (which will be narrated by Martin Sheen) and a complementary book on the way, a capstone will have been put in place. Youngsters engrossed by the legend will actually have a means to visit her, to see her mighty prow, to sense her size and majesty. Plans to edit the 100 hours of original videotape into an interactive videodisc will allow arm-chair tourists the freedom to explore her, diving to the buckled plates of her fatal wound, then up to the crow's nest, along the deck, past the empty davits, and through the debris field to the stern, with its ripped railings offering silent testimony to the hundreds who desperately prayed for a miracle as the Titanic slipped into the sea.

Secrets of the Titanic is the first step in that direction. Watching at home, we join a remarkable explorer in an expedition our Edwardian predecessors could hardly imagine. 

out a wide zoom range.

Knowing the history of the MOS imager, I expected it to do well in low light, but I was unprepared for how well it would do, producing an acceptable picture with surprisingly little noise at what seemed impossibly dim surroundings. The low light capabilities of the RCA MOS imager and Panasonic CCD imager (with their respective optical packages) represent a new high watermark in solid-state imager camcorders. Mark last year: in 1986 the camera pickup tube became obsolete.

The RCA 300's controls are in logical places. In day-to-day situations it is reasonably comfortable to shoot with for long periods, despite its 5.5 lb. empty weight. The camcorder's time-remaining display in the EVF is a good idea, but you have to press the reset button when using a T-160 cassette for an accurate time-remaining read-out. Full VCR playback controls are provided, along with a day and/or time generator for tape references. This is great for video camcorder critics but will anyone else use the time feature? Let's hope so.

The Pro Wonder's autofocus is infrared, with the usual constraints: sloping or inclined surfaces, distant objects, glass, small dark objects, and so on. But it works well in low light, whereas contrast measuring systems do not. I also found the RCA camcorder scores high on assembly detail: it is solidly built.

I reviewed the 1985 Pro Wonder last year, and I applaud RCA for promptly improving the microphone assembly. Another annoyance was the lack of aperture control. The new multi-position iris adjustment works well in both manual and automatic modes. However, I'm still not happy with the oddly-shaped EVF screen (it's octagonal). I'd also like a fold-away EVF. If this seems highly critical, even petty, it's

CAMCORDER

continued from page 67

(12.5-69mm) f/1.2 lens, providing sharp and detailed video images indoors and outdoors. Color reproduction is uniformly good. For instance, a forested hillside reproduced in a vital, naturally rich green, with excellent color stability; no color shift at all was noted when the lighting changed from cloudy to bright sunlight, with the continuous automatic white balancing switch in the auto position. (An effective manual white balance switch with four programmed settings also is provided.) Road sign letters were sharp and clear through-



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because this camcorder is excellent. It has the bare bones of a hotrod in the body of a nice family sedan. This seems to be aimed at two completely different kind of buyers—the 'hands-off' customer who wants totally automated operation, and the videophile who wants full creative control.

SONY'S LITTLE ONE

The Sony 8mm CCD-V110 is so new it almost didn't make it in time for my test. In matters electronic, Sony opted for a unique color processing system, plus newly developed filters for the individual signals. It all works. Color reproduction is excellent, and balanced with just about perfect intensity and no color shifting. Indeed, the 110 produces the most natural looking colors I've seen in a consumer video product. And, although the Sony has trouble keeping up with the RCA and Panasonic camcorders in low light (at the high sensitivity position the CCD-V110 is grainy) the processing system doggedly holds its color purity.

There is a philosophical difference between the CCD-V110 and Sony's previous CCD-V8AF. This camcorder is made for the serious video enthusiast, while its older brother is a snapshot machine. Its editing features include a remote terminal for an editing controller connection, an edit switch to compensate for second generation loss, and, for creativity, a sharpness control, frame-by-frame advance, insert editing capability, and, of course, a flying erase head for smooth scene transitions.

Sony also has introduced a host of interesting options that further enhance the appeal of the 110. By connecting a special cable to the accessory connector you can loop out the camera video signal to a digital video superimposer, a special effects generator, or a color corrector before it is sent to the VCR. This allows you to make a first generation super-imposed picture. In other camcorders these processors make only second generation tapes.

Among other notable features, the automatic gain control allows you to set white balance in low light; in auto mode white balancing is continuous and automatic. Time lapse photography is possible with the 110 by simply pressing the interval key. The camcorder then will write 8 frames every 15 seconds for 30 minutes. There's also a wipe fader with 7 color selectable wipes and a character generator for titles and subtitles.

I also like the LCD display, which goes beyond mere utility by displaying not only a four-digit counter (mode 1) but time remaining in hours, minutes, and seconds (mode 2). The Sony TTL autofocus system is an image sensing type, with good overall accuracy. But it's not good in low light and without manual focusing aids in the EVF (as available on the Zenith TTL system).

A few other criticisms: the small operating controls—particularly in the VCR sec-

tion—make this not the camcorder for ham-handed users. Julius Erving can palm a basketball with either hand, but the good Dr. J may not be able to activate the tiny frame advance button. Also, the small 0.7-inch black & white EVF offers a dim alphanumeric display of operating modes making it difficult to read against a bright background.

While its \$1995 price tag may strike some as being a bit on the dear side, I suspect, overall, that the only people who won't enjoy the new Sony entry are camcorder makers that don't have a similarly hot model on the drawing board. No serious videophile should pass within 100 yards of a video store without giving the 110 a tryout.

ZENITH'S COMPACT VHS

The obvious advantage of the Compact VHS Zenith VM6200 is its size and portability, a scaling down effort done only slightly at the expense of performance. It's the smallest and lightest of the four camcorders. I expected it to be the most comfortable in long-run shooting, and it was, even though my experience is that your arm and hand tire quickly with handheld cameras, compared to shoulder mount designs.

Outdoors, the Zenith camcorder performed well, roughly the equal of the others in resolution and with clear sharp edges—HQ circuitry at work—and excellent color accuracy. That the small Zenith camcorder can hold its own with bigger models speaks volumes about Japanese miniaturization and shows how the art of camcorder design has come a long way.

Indoors, color purity and accuracy good in the EP speed and SP speed, but picture clarity suffered a bit under extreme conditions in the EP mode, with the camcorder much more prone to snow and graininess in dark areas of the picture. No color streaking or jittery edges were evident, but when picture quality is important I'd recommend the SP speed.


Indoors, too, the Zenith suffers from a lack of low light power against the RCA and Panasonic camcorders and it doesn't hold color to the end as well as the Sony. It's not that the TCL autofocus system borrows part of the image from the CCD imager; Zenith provides the autofocus circuitry with an optical port of its own. And it's my suspicion that blame for this camcorder's low light showing can't entirely be laid at the doorstep of the CCD imager; I have a hunch it's the optics package, a not-very-fast f/1.6 lens. In sizing down, some sacrifices were made, and the look and feel of the lens gives the impression this was one.

The camera and VCR controls, however, are solid under the fingertips, and all work well without noticeable lag. Praise also should be paid to the great camcorder status indication in the viewfinder: recording, pause, recording speed, filter switch settings, manual focusing aids, low con-

trast warnings, low light indication, and battery and tape end warnings. Good, too, is the button which puts all circuits on automatic pilot with one touch. The 6200 does not have manual iris or white balance controls, and no time or date graphics, but it does offer a usable fixed backlight control.

AND THE WINNERS ARE...

Overall these camcorders demonstrated a surprisingly high level of picture performance. I'm usually fussy in the extreme, and I was delighted with the indoor and outdoor shooting results. All four camcorders are

good! I found myself in the happy position of the child deciding among four favorite brands of chocolate ice cream. Each has its own unique flavor, but how do you decide one is better than the others? Nevertheless, since none of these camcorders is inexpensive, you can only afford a single scoop. So, after changing my mind a couple of times, I finally settled on the Sony because of the accuracy of its color reproduction, but also for expanding the options available to camcorder buyers by looping the video signal out of the camera section before routing it to the VCR. 



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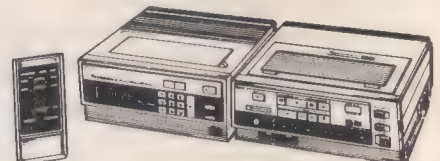
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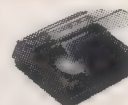
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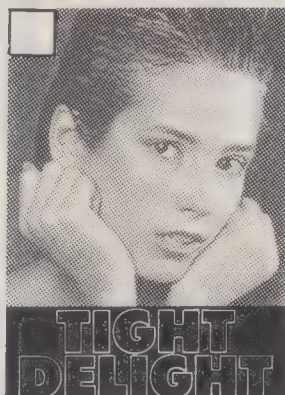
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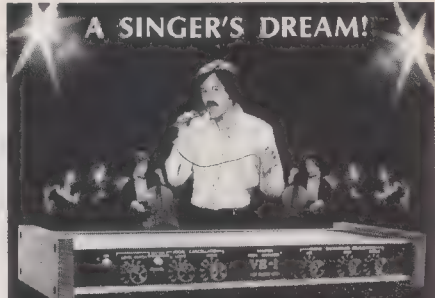
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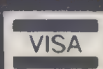
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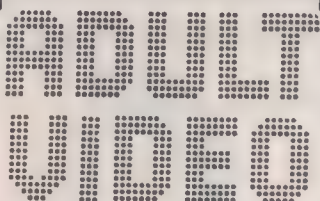
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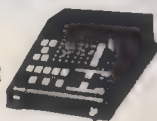
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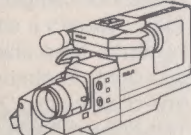
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Off the Air

The Last Word

Network Bird Watching

By Bob Brewin

The nice thing about the booming video culture is it offers opportunities both large and small. For every megabuck company with big ideas, there's a small company that's been able to couple foresight, marketing savvy, and technology. One such self-defined "nice, little business" is Satellite Broadcast Networks, which rose from the ashes of one of the biggest players in the cable business, the Group W Cable subsidiary of Westinghouse Electric.

Last summer, as Westinghouse started to sell off its cable systems, four Group W executives decided to pool their severance pay and start a business aimed at one special video segment: the 45 percent of the home satellite dish market that could not receive an over-the-air network TV signal.

Despite the multiplicity of signals available (even as more satellite channels were scrambled), home dish owners spent 49 percent of their time watching network TV. But watching ABC, CBS, and NBC with a dish isn't as easy as picking up the same signal off the air. The networks use a variety of feeds to get their programs to affiliates around the country, backhauling broadcasts from one coast to another then re-uplinking the signal. These are often raw feeds, too, filled with cues from far-off directors and idle chatter from newsmen waiting for the camera light to come on. It's fine for folks who like to eavesdrop, but not for program continuity. The sheer number of feeds used by the three networks often require dish owners to shift from bird to bird and

transponder to transponder to catch an evening's worth of prime time.


Soon, ABC, CBS, and NBC plan to make it even harder for homesat owners. Sometime this year they plan to scramble all those feeds, depriving dish owners of network shows. This was the real impetus behind Satellite Broadcast Networks. Janet Foster, SBN's programming chief, says its market research showed that out of the existing audience of 1.5 million dish owners, some 720,000 could not receive network signals over the air. Nor could they ever hope to receive a cable hook-up either. These folks are truly rural Americans, the electronically disenfranchised who can't see any kind of television at all without a dish.

Late in 1986, SBN started providing those dish owners with network signals by selling what Foster calls "basic cable TV reception in the sky." The company picks up the over-the-air signals of network affiliates in Atlanta, Chicago, and New York, scrambles them, and uplinks them to the satellite. Anyone who has already purchased a VideoCipher II decoder to receive Home Box Office, Showtime, or Cable News Network can also receive the network signals without any added hardware cost.

SBN took another important step: it priced its service sensibly. In a business in which one prerecorded videotape goes for \$79.95 and HBO sells its monthly service to home dish owners at a price higher than cable subscribers are charged, SBN's prices are downright cheap. A home dish owner gets all

three network signals—including a stereo audio feed—for \$49.95 a year. As Foster says, "We didn't want to overprice it, but now it seems we might have underpriced it." Still, at this price she says SBN can have a profitable business if only one quarter of the company's projected audience, about 150,000 dish owners, subscribe.

The company also took a low-key, low-risk approach to the hardware end of its business. Instead of building an expensive satellite facility, it turned to National Gateway Communications, a Pacific Bell subsidiary headquartered in New Jersey, to handle all the uplinking. SBN made it easy for potential viewers to subscribe, too. Unlike the cable networks, which seem to go out of their way to make subscribing difficult, SBN vends its service three ways: through an 800 number, through a homesat dealer network, and in packages with other services like CNN.

Just because the four former Group W executives have a nice little business, it doesn't mean they're content to stand still. They are investigating ways to use the VideoCipher descrambling system—which can deliver other services besides video—to offer other products to the homes. "We know a lot of companies have lost a lot of money in the videotext area" says Foster, "but we think we can do it." What kind of text? "I'm not going to give away our next good idea before the first one gets off the ground," Foster says, suggesting there is more to come from this scrappy start-up. 

They talk dirty. They play rough. And they take long, long showers.



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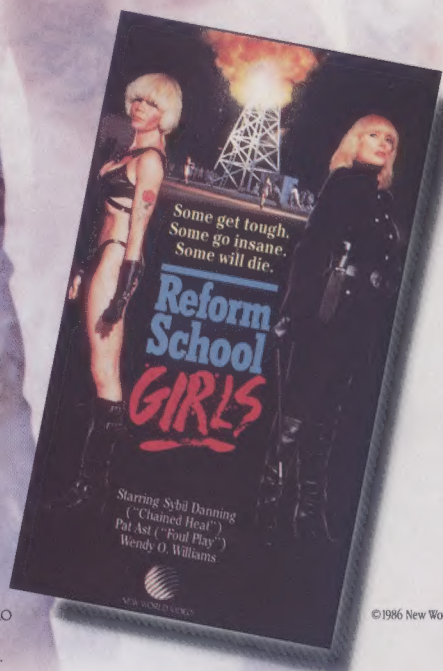
Howard Wexler Executive Producers Gregory Hinton and Leo Angeles

Produced by Jack Cummins Written and Directed by Tom DeSimone



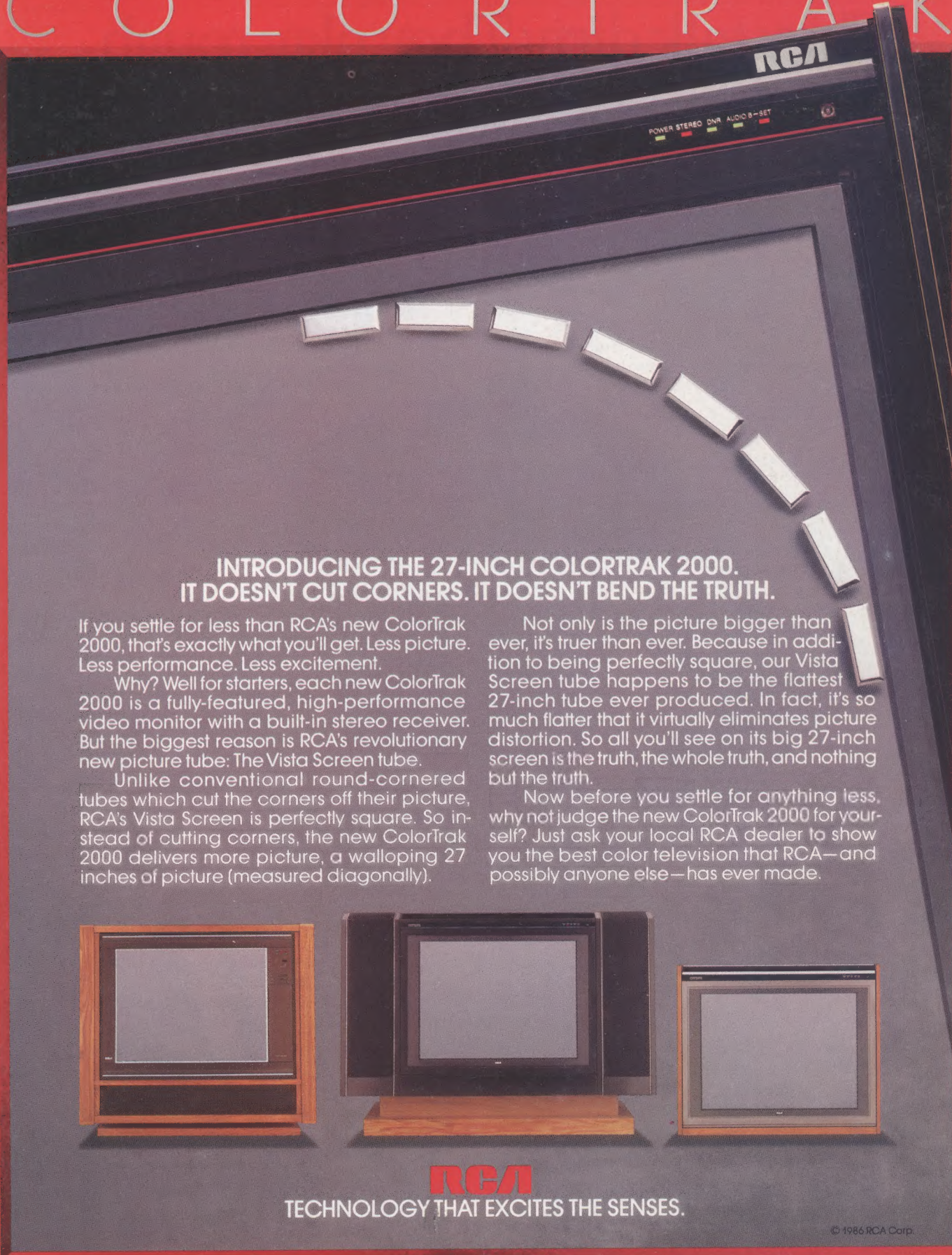
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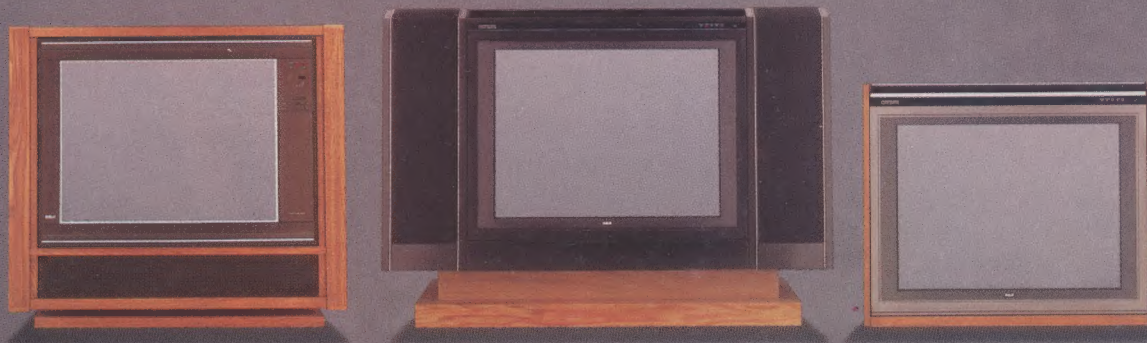
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